

CENTREPIECES

Mental Health Arts Project
Registered Charity 1160300

ARTISTS UPDATE

APRIL - MAY 2023

NEW PREMISES !

As most people will be aware we have for some time been trying to secure additional premises for Centrepieces activities since losing our Pop Up spaces in Bexleyheath over a year ago. The exciting news is that we have now finalised a one year (minimum) lease to take over half of the downstairs space in Sidcup Manor House, situated on Sidcup Green in between the High St and QMH. This will enable us to set up our Artists Studios once again, store artwork and undertake some of our workshops. The full extent of activities allowable under planning regulations is still being worked out. We now have the keys and access to the building and are in the process of cleaning, laying flooring and making preparations for when we start art activities there in May. We moved all the art studio equipment and artwork from our storage space in Sandwich, Kent on April 13th and I'd like to say a big thanks to our team of 10 helpers who made this large operation go so smoothly, and to those working inside the Manor House itself. Karen is overseeing the arrangements for managing our new space with a number of volunteers taking on roles with responsibility on a day to day basis. It is the start of a new phase in the life of Centrepieces, and once again we will be recruiting more volunteers to help run the activities there in addition to the Lodge, where most workshops will still continue. The next step will be to move the large amount of artwork we still have stored in our shipping container at Belvedere into Sidcup Manor House so it can be sorted out and we'll need help to photograph and catalogue the work with and return some to artists.

ART WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Weekly workshops will continue at the Lodge at Hall Place as usual, although some will now take place at Sidcup Manor House. Some are still available on Zoom, details of these and the exact location of each session are contained in the monthly programme.

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.

Soundscape workshops: We have recently been circulating information about a series of workshops we hope to be run by PhD student Madison Miller learning how to photograph and record sounds in nature which can be conducive to help with destressing and relaxation. Full information on the email group and her websites are <https://coreupulencemusic.com/> and <https://www.flickr.com/photos/millerkillerphotography/> Contact Geoff at info@centrepieces.org if you are interested in taking part.

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 current Tutors are: Peter Kent, Lucy Thomas, Karen Larkin, Nicki Lessing, Alex Spendley, Kim Campbell. Liam Davies, Nadia Halliday, Mandy Fernandez, Sue Wieck, Wendy Clay and John Exell.

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

QUEEN'S GALLERY ROYAL COLLECTION The Queen's Gallery continues to offer free Community Zoom sessions on a Wednesday, details of which Sue circulates on the Centrepieces email group.

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=ZmwwdVZKdjFMVnNjWlMvbXRzOUUpSdz09>

Meeting ID: 904 476 9010

Passcode: 624813

ART EXHIBITIONS

THE STABLES GALLERY EXHIBITION AUG/SEPT 2023: This exhibition is scheduled for 3/8/23 – 6/9/23. theme is yet to be decided, to be announced soon, though we have decided to include some of the artwork which is due to be shown in our two May/June Exhibitions at Sandwich and The Exchange Erith. Due to the closure of the Stables Shop on 14/3/23 and the consequent lack of support from Hall Place with no staff presence in the gallery area or payments able to be taken by Hall Place, we have been forced into considering whether we can continue with these exhibitions. To do so will require a great deal more stewarding by Centrepieces artists and volunteers, and the creation of a way for members of the public to pay for artwork they wish to purchase. Discussions are currently underway but it does mean that there will need to be more commitment to

stewarding and a rota created before the exhibition starts. It would be a great shame if our Stables Exhibitions cease to happen as they have always provided a great opportunity for our artists to showcase and sell their artwork.

THE UNHEARD, THE UNSEEN: This exhibition was held in November 2022 and included work by C/P artist Beverley Coldron at the Old Lightwell Gallery at UEL and was supported by the Anti Slavery National organisation.

ELIXIR GALLERY: The date of our next exhibition in this gallery in the West Entrance of Queen Elizabeth Hospital is yet to be confirmed.

LIBRARY EXHIBITIONS: We will be finding out if it is possible to hold more of these at Erith and Central Libraries.

CAPITAL ARTS GALLERY: Contact Geoff if you would like to be considered for help with exhibiting/ selling 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 and events for which artists can apply to submit work.

'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 secured an agreement with the Linden Hall Gallery in Deal Kent to hold an exhibition at this prestigious venue once we have secured the necessary funding, which we are looking into at the moment.

'INNER ME' EXHIBITION: This exhibition will showcase the artwork produced by Centrepieces artists through a series of workshops funded by a William Kendal Grant and take place at the Exchange Erith. Installation date is Wed 24th May with an opening on Thursday 25th to be taken down on Friday 2nd June. More details to be circulated on the Centrepieces email group.

DRILL HALL SANDWICH: We have recently been publicising this exhibition which is due to be installed on May 9th 2023 at this friendly community art café/pizza venue (where we held our 'Body Image' exhibition in 2019) in Sandwich, Kent. The theme of the Exhibition is that of World Mental Health Awareness Week 2023, 'Anxiety', a brief for which has been sent out to all Centrepieces artists for submissions, deadline Friday 21st April. The exhibition is being installed on Tuesday 9th May and will continue until the end of June. We hope to organise an opening/ preview event, details to be confirmed.

CREEK CREATIVE FAVERSHAM: If you are interested in holding a 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 showing at the following venues: 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.

Kings Arms Pub Bexleyheath We recently met with the manager of this pub and discussed displaying a few pieces of artwork for sale inside to be rotated on a monthly basis and promotion of the work of Centrepieces. As a start they have installed a large temporary banner attached to scaffolding outside showing an image of a painting by Centrepieces artist Trevor Whiting which looks great so have a look if you get the chance.

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 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.

Also Britta's three later 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, 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 and Ann is currently producing a follow up which is soon to be published.

Dorota Chioma's 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 'Notes from Postnatal Depression, Healing through Art' similarly rich in beautiful artwork and accompanying poetry, containing a lot of interesting information about postnatal depression including Dorota's personal experiences, also priced at £18. Dorota co-produced a publication entitled 'Sleep and Mental Health' which is part of the regular 'This Zine has Issues', a journal devoted to breaking the stigmas attached to mental ill health. Copies are available at the Lodge price £15. Dorota has also recently published a Colouring Book called 'Tinctured, Mental Health in Pictures' also available from the Lodge, priced £10.

Prints and Cards: We continue to produce a good selection of cards from images of C/P artists work, which sell well at our exhibitions and other venues. They are primarily to help with fundraising for Centrepieces so 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

2022 Xmas cards sold well raising several hundred pounds.

DIVERSITY ACCESS PROGRAMME:

We are considering creating an arts programme in partnership with local groups which are used by the various BAME communities in the borough, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Bexley as a London borough in 2025. This initiative is supported by the Culture Network, an organisation to which Centrepieces belongs.

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME:

Red Hill Primary School: We are currently near completion of the Rainbow Mosaic Mural to commemorate this school's 70th anniversary in 2021. The project was funded by the school and may include mosaic workshops with individual classes to finalise.

SANE INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS AWARDS: 8 Centrepieces Artists have applied for these awards for up to £300 per person, the outcome is expected imminently.

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: The 2022 Auction took place on Saturday Dec 3rd at the Exchange Erith. The artwork and display of merchandise for sale on the day looked fantastic in their 'Town Hall' area. Unfortunately there were fewer bidders attending than usual and few advanced bids although we still managed to sell nearly £1400 of work, about £500 of which went to Centrepieces. There was a good turn out of helpers on the day but again virtually no stewarding for the week or so of the display which meant that it was not accessible to the public at all times. We will be reviewing how the Art Auction is carried out, especially the publicity and stewarding to ascertain whether it is still viable, as we normally expect a better return on sales for the amount of work and resources which it takes to make the event happen.

VOLUNTEERS: New volunteers include Gajanani Ganeshu, who is helping with exhibitions and picture loans, Izzie Gately with Social Media and Carrie Breed who will be taking on a key role in Centrepieces Fundraising. As mentioned above we are also recruiting more volunteers to help with Sidcup Manor House and other specific volunteering roles.

AGM: The 2022 AGM took place at a later date than usual this year on Wed Feb 15th 2023 in the Education Room at Hall Place Visitors Centre. The AGM included a number of speeches from our Trustees, Patron Willow Winston and C/P artists and volunteers Liam Davies, Izzie Gately and Sally Thompson, with a presentation of our workshop programme from Karen Larkin. Three new Trustees have joined the board this year, Eileen Pallen, Georgina Lonergan and Sally MacGregor, with Merissa Hylton and Stefano Nocerino retiring. A number of Jackie Grieve Inspire Awards were made to Barry Levitt, Sally Thompson, Izzie Gately, Adam Dean, Lesley Cody and Annie Greywoode for their volunteering and artistic achievements. There was a good attendance with a number of new CIO members followed by lunch at the Lodge