

Student Newsletter 17 July 2020

Thanksgiving Liturgy 2020



"Think of the love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called the Children of God, for that is what we are..." Psalm139

At 2pm you will be able to view the virtual version of the End of Year Liturgy.

You'll have to provide the ice creams this time!

Do join in with this lovely end to the school year.

As we come to the end of a very strange academic year, one that will probably be taught about in the history books in 200 years time we take a moment to reflect on what we miss about school and what we are looking forward to in September.

Here is what some of our departments said:

The RE department:

We have missed the classroom interactions and the lively debate.
We have missed your sense of humour. We are excited discuss the events of the day with you again in September.

The Art department:

We have missed the buzz of students getting creative in an art room and the thrill of seeing students work develop.
We am most looking forward to hearing about how students managed to be creative during lockdown and am most definitely looking forward to the interactions with real people.

From all in PE:

We cannot wait to have you back in for face to face PE lessons. Teaching through Teams is good, but is not ideal for our subject so we are really looking forward to being able to put you through your paces again. But the biggest thing we are missing are the extra-curricular clubs we run throughout the week.

Message from MFL:

We have all really missed the fun we have in lessons. We have missed seeing your smiles and hearing you speaking in French and Spanish to each other and to us.
We are looking forward to being able to see you learning again, to answering questions and giving feedback in person rather than by email and to helping you explore French and Spanish language and culture in detail.

The Music department:

What have I missed most? Making music! I have missed my noisy classroom and rehearsals for ASV and band. Working with students to compose and perform music is the best part of my job, and unfortunately this is has not been possible during time we have been away from school. I am hopeful we will be able to start our rehearsals once again in the new year and the department will return to the exciting, creative and musical place it should be!

STOP THE VIRUS - SAVE LIVES

Hello from the English department!

We have really missed seeing you all and teaching you. Some of our favourite ways of teaching - through drama, speaking and listening, group and paired work - have not been possible whilst we've been off school so we can't wait to come back in September and start having great discussions with you all again. The 'Chat' on Live Lessons has given us an insight into your thoughts and ideas but we would love to hear your voices again in person. Keep reading over the summer holidays - novels, newspapers, poetry, comics, plays, magazines - whatever you enjoy.

Sending much love from us all

From the maths team:

We have missed the deep and meaningful mathematical discussions in lessons, the arguing about which solution is best and the reward of solving a difficult problem together. We're looking forward to some pertinent and challenging questions from students when we return to our classes, and hope we'll have some answers!

The Drama department:

I have missed the energetic warm up to whatever track I fancy listening to and all the students trying to keep up with me, especially when I use the song "Jump" by The Pointer Sisters. Challenge to all for next year - don't stop - keep going!!!!

I have missed the natural interactions between students in Drama and seeing them challenge themselves when they think nobody is watching them.

Just miss teaching the practical side of Drama -

There has been lots of discussion during lockdown about the chance to be creative and pursue activities which are not academic. Here is an interview from a very talented ex-student who is making a stir in the art world and whose work on theme of 'isolation' received an Arts society award. <https://theartssociety.org/>

What does it mean to you to win this award?

It's amazing, quite unbelievable actually, there was such a string selection of work between finalists so just to be shortlisted was a real personal achievement, so to win just goes beyond that entirely. I was so overwhelmed by the response and love I've had during the competition and I know I'm surrounded by some amazing people and can't thank them enough for helping get to this point. I'm so grateful to the Arts Society for putting so much energy into young artists, they run competitions for young artists every year and it's so important that they do. The level of exposure and recognition you gain for being involved is vital to any artist in the early stages of their career and has only made me want to create more, I've never felt more part of the art community than I do at the moment.

Tell us a bit about the painting and its challenges...

The painting is a Self-portrait of me in the bath having cuppa, a very normal and everyday thing for me, in and out of lockdown. The fact that it is a self-portrait initially presented a challenge as I'm never usually the focus of my own work so this was a very new and daunting experience. It was something I, at first, was very uncomfortable with at first but something I had to overcome

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very quickly as not only am I the main focus, I'm also in an almost vulnerable and personal position. The moment captured is very genuine, it's my place, within my house, where I can escape and feel very relaxed and with painting this I am inviting people into this experience. The piece for me was about overcoming these moments of discomfort. First I had to be comfortable being photographed in this position, then comfortable analysing the details of my own form and building this relationship between myself and the piece and I had to then find comfort in sharing this very intimate experience with a large audience of people. Then I've found this idea has extended beyond the piece, I've had to gain confidence and comfort in talking quite deeply about my motivations and aims, about my experience of lockdown and quite intensely about my work the winning piece itself. All of these challenges I have overcome and created an extremely personal and meaningful piece that I am so proud of. How did it feel to feature on BBCRadio4 women's hour? And also on the BBC? The idea of it was terrifying, to be on the radio full stop was, but Women's Hour seemed somewhat of another level of exposure and pressure. I do think after the interview on Women's hour my confidence in talking about my piece and my life increased and I was much more comfortable after that experience going into other interviews. I think with radio, because it's live and everything you say is heard, the idea of it was much scarier than TV, but really it just feels like you're having a chat with someone who's genuinely interested in what you've got to say. The BBC Look North interview was great as well, the reporter was so genuine and you could tell he loved his job and I just forgot the camera was there really. I said yes to every opportunity that came my way, even if it terrified me, because it's so important to get your voice heard and I knew it was the perfect opportunity for that.

I hear that even J K Rowling was impressed with one of your paintings? Which one was it and how did this come about?

I absolutely love Harry Potter and somehow my obsession has managed to grow over the lockdown period so to have a response from JK Rowling was insane to me. It was the Winning Piece 'Brewing' that attracted her attention and it's definitely one of the stand out moments of my year! haha

What and who is your inspiration?

How are you finding life at Leeds University on your arts degree course? Art education has been so important for me, throughout my life I've always sort to learn more about the materials I was using and to educate myself on how to do things better. After my A-levels I knew that I didn't want this journey with art to formally end. I am so glad I decided to do an art degree, my perspective on art and the art world has evolved way past what it was two years ago. You learn to not only approach art in a different way but the world,

What direction will you take your artwork in next? What is your favourite media and why? Do you have any new commissions?

I actually have a 'photoshoot' planned today, where I basically force my friends to dress up and model for me! I have been so excited to get some new pictures done. I love to add a theatrical element to my work, utilising light, costume, staging and narrative, it's something I did a lot of in my A-levels and can't wait to get back into. I have commissions lined up but I really want to focus on self-led work, The thing with commissions is that it's not my heart on the canvas, it's someone else's. I know I do my best work when it's self-led and comes from a place of passion and excitement within myself, because I feel

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like people can really see that in the work. In my new work I really want to get experimenting again, without the pressure of a commissioned piece, I want to learn more about oil paints, about their mediums and ways I can manipulate them. I am constantly educating myself, I don't think I will ever view myself as a 'complete' artist, there's always something else to explore and develop and that possibility is so exciting.

I see that you also love sculpture- how did that change of direction come about and do you plan to combine sculpture with your talent in figurative painting at any point?

My interest in sculpture has definitely always been there I think, maybe something that was slightly subconscious. When I look back at the work I've done through A-level especially I can see that desire to explore materiality and form, using materials and mixed media within my work to give a piece this very tactile appearance. This developed almost immediately when I went to University, it was quite funny for me to discover as I don't think I realised at first, but I didn't paint once (in the traditional sense of the word) everything I did was sculptural and it took me until the end of the year to realise and be like, hang on a second, I think I've become a sculpture artist! You can definitely see that my sculptural practice links back to my interest in painting, in my focus on colour, materiality, and the desire to work very tactilely with my work, so the two certainly influence and inform one another. So I don't think it was necessarily a change in direction just again a reflection of my desire to learn and develop my practical skills. and discover new routes of expression.

You have mentioned that being an artist "up north" is very important to you, how do you plan to develop your skills and where after you finish your degree in Leeds? Do you think it is important that as many artists as possible stay living and working in their home regions and why?

I think people often view London as this epicentre for the arts and yes there are so many opportunities in London for creatives but itself by no means the only option. I think Sheffield is amazing and the only reason I didn't stay in Sheffield for my degree is because The University of Sheffield doesn't do an Art Degree but I knew I wanted to stay up north. For me it's important to embrace where you live and work, but for a while I think the only opportunities for artists were in the London Area but that's not the case anymore. I've spent quite a lot of time working with Sheffield theatres and I think they are the pride of Sheffield, outside of London they are the best theatre complex around. Leeds also has a thriving Arts scene and I'm constantly inspired by where I live. If I live in the UK for the rest of my life I can't see myself living anywhere but up north.

Which is your favourite painting you have created and why?

'Brewing' is by far. For me it symbolises this moment for me of clarity, where I not only regained my love for painting again but also where I realised that, if I can make it happen, I want to do it as my career.

Where do you see yourself in two years time?

Now, I see myself painting, which I didn't before, I am still looking at doing a masters degree in theatre but at the moment I want to take a year after my final year of university to focus solely on my artistic practice. I'm also moving house soon and I have a corgi with my boyfriend, so I'll be in a different house, with hopefully a home studio and maybe another corgi!

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What do you think art is so important?

Many people view Art as a Luxury but I think, over this lockdown especially, everyone has been realising that it is actually a necessity. Art has not only given me a route of expression but also given me a way of thinking that can be so useful across any sort of career, I approach situations much more open-minded and with a creativity that allows me to problem-solve. As a Wellbeing Rep at University I constantly advocate for the use of the Art for wellbeing as it's got an endless list of benefits, most of which I've experienced first-hand.

If you had three top tips for our art students what would they be?

You get out what you put in, art is a very demanding subject but also the best subject there is! you have to put the effort in to educate yourself and learn about all the different ways to use the different materials - if uni has taught me anything it's this, unlike A-level, there's not someone that is constantly reminding you to do the work, it's very self-led, just like the art world itself.

Go to as many exhibitions and shows as possible, research artists, read about art history and critique, there's so much around to help develop you as an artist that you can't access from just experimenting. Instagram is such a great platform to connect with the artworld in all its forms, it's somewhere I constantly seek inspiration.

ENJOY YOURSELF - do the art you want to do, not what you think you should. Art is about expression so express yourself!

What benefits did you gain from studying A-level art at All Saints?

I developed so much over my time at A-level and created many pieces of work I'm still really proud of today! It's a real step up from GCSE and you have much more of a freedom to explore what kind of artist you want to be. Because it's so focused on showing those stages of experimentation you really learn how to develop your work in a thought-provoking and in depth way. It's also really useful in learning how to critique your own and others artwork which is extremely important for going onto a degree in art as this is one of the most important things. Analysing not only the successes but also the failures is so important to grow and develop as an artist, without it you don't learn or get any better!

Enjoy the summer break it is a time for rest and a chance to revitalise. In September we return to school with a new focus and renewed energy.

A prayer to remind us of our mission to act out God's love for us in our daily lives.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

No hands but yours, no feet but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ's compassion to the World;

Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good;

Yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.

St Teresa of Avila

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