

## **A Staffordshire school secures £22k Arts Council England funding to stage a major contemporary art exhibition in Newcastle-under-Lyme**

- The Young Curators Art Project involves 14 pupils from Madeley School, Brampton Museum & Art Gallery and former pupil and art dealer Dr Jack Roberts
- The exhibition will feature contemporary artwork from Dr Jack Roberts
- Brampton Museum will host the exhibition in early 2024

A group of Staffordshire school pupils are to curate a high-profile contemporary art exhibition after securing funding from Arts Council England.

The Young Curators Art Project, which has been backed to the tune of £22,900 from Arts Council England via the National Lottery Project Grants, is a collaboration between 14 Key Stage 3 and 4 students at [Madeley School](#), art dealer and former Madeley pupil Dr Jack Roberts and [The Brampton Museum](#) in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

The six-month long project will introduce the young curators to a range of art experts and freelance professionals to learn about curating an exhibition, which will be held at The Brampton Museum between February and April 2024.

Plans for the art exhibition, including the title and selected artworks, will be unveiled in January 2024.

The idea for the project, which is an extra-curricular activity, was devised by Madeley School's Faculty Leader of Performance and Creativity, Katie Leath and Dr Roberts, who is a former pupil of Katie's.

Dr Roberts, owner of commercial art dealing business [Art Addict](#), said: "My interest in art was initially kindled at Madeley School by my art teacher Katie Leath. I have followed my passion, and I am now an art dealer and an artist in my own right - art is my life."

"It's great being involved in The Young Curators Project as I'm coming back to where it all started for me. I will share my experience of curating exhibitions, while I am also opening up my entire art collection, allowing the young curators the opportunity to select artwork for an outstanding exhibition from some of the world's best-known artists."

The Young Curators Project, which also involves the school's Head of Art Gemma Stockdale, has a number of aims including enhancing the skills and knowledge of the students and introducing them to a range of professionals within the sector.

In preparing for the exhibition, the pupils will engage with art framers, exhibition curators, artists and journalists, as well undertaking a number of visits to galleries.

The project also looks to share the artwork with the wider Staffordshire community. The free exhibition, which will open in early February and run for nine weeks, will bring contemporary art by famous artists to a locality where the public rarely have the opportunity to engage with or view high-end contemporary art.

Katie Leath said: "This is an incredibly exciting project for us at the school and especially for the pupils involved. All of them are incredibly enthusiastic and committed to the Young Curators Project."

"It is a unique collaboration between the school, the gallery and Dr Roberts, and we're grateful to them, our other project partners and everyone else involved in making this happen including the Shaw Education Trust and the Arts Council.

"The school is currently on its Artsmark Award journey and this project will help the school to achieve some of its Artsmark aims, such as 'To empower all pupils to increase their engagement in Arts and Culture'."

Mr Nixon, Principal of Madeley school said "we are immensely proud of the students and staff at Madeley School for their involvement in The Young Curators Art Project. This collaboration with Dr

Jack Roberts, the Brampton Museum, and other project partners exemplifies the creativity and dedication within our school community. The project not only provides a unique opportunity for students to curate a high-profile exhibition but also aligns with our commitment to enriching the educational experience through engagement with the arts. We appreciate the support of the Arts Council, the Shaw Education Trust, and all those involved in making this innovative project a reality."

Describing itself as a hidden gem, the Brampton Museum has undergone a £850,000 two-year transformation, which includes a new gallery.

Teresa Mason, Culture and Arts Manager, Brampton Museum, said: "We're delighted to be working with Madeley School and Dr Jack Roberts on this innovative and ground-breaking project.

"Brampton Museum are greatly looking forward to enhancing the students' skills and knowledge of curating a high-profile exhibition of contemporary artists which will be on-show in 2024.

"We are looking forward to seeing how these young people from the Borough interpret this fantastic art collection."