
EMS ART & DESIGN

**ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM
COLLEGE ART AND DESIGN NEWSLETTER
TERM 2 2025-2026**



As we begin the Autumn term, the Art Department is delighted to welcome our students back into the studio, ready for a new season of creativity, curiosity, and artistic exploration. This term marks a fresh start filled with exciting projects, new techniques, and opportunities for students to develop confidence in their ideas and practical skills.

We're already inspired by the enthusiasm students have shown as they settle back into their creative routines, and we look forward to showcasing their progress and achievements throughout the term. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Intense focussed Art intervention:

Two Year 11 students, who joined the course exceptionally late in the year, have made remarkable progress by creating expressive ceramic head sculptures inspired by the work of Gustav Klimt.

Despite having far less time than their peers, both students quickly engaged with the project and demonstrated strong determination to develop their skills. They explored Klimt’s distinctive style—his use of intricate pattern, rich colour, and symbolic decorative elements—and translated these influences into their own three-dimensional clay forms.

Working through the full ceramic process in a condensed timeframe, they produced sculptural heads that show clear consideration of facial structure, surface texture, and artistic intent. They incorporated Klimt-inspired motifs into the surface decoration, using pattern, linework, and metallic finishes to echo his iconic aesthetic while still expressing their own individuality.

Their commitment, creativity, and ability to catch up with complex practical work in such a short period is highly commendable, and their final outcomes contribute strongly to the overall quality of the group’s work.



Trust-Wide CPD: Supporting Students to Achieve Top Grades in GCSE Photography

In October, Head of Art, **Mr. Meynell**, delivered specialist training to Art and Photography teachers from across the Trust. The focus of the session was how we can best support students in achieving **Grades 7–9 in GCSE Photography**.

What the Training Covered

Teachers explored:

- What high-grade GCSE Photography work looks like
- How to challenge and inspire our most able students
- Effective teaching approaches and project design
- Ways to ensure marking and feedback are consistent across all Trust schools

Staff reviewed examples of top-grade work and discussed strategies for helping students develop strong technical skills, creative independence, and a clear personal vision in their photography projects.

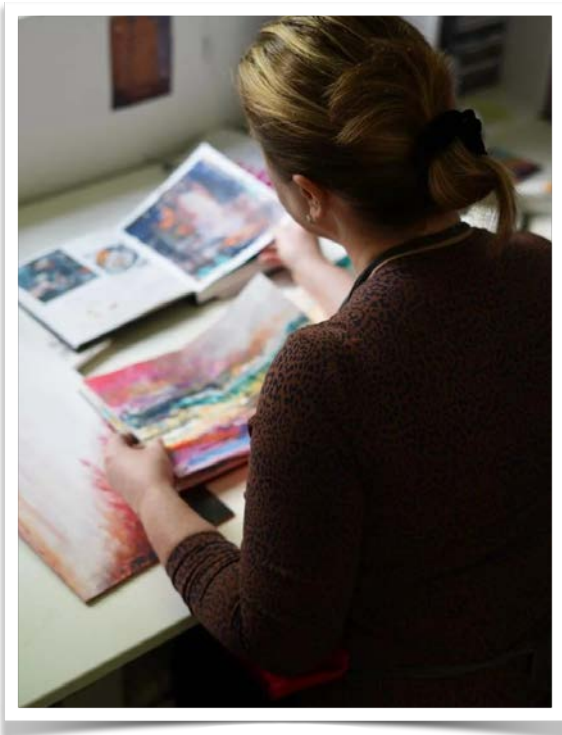
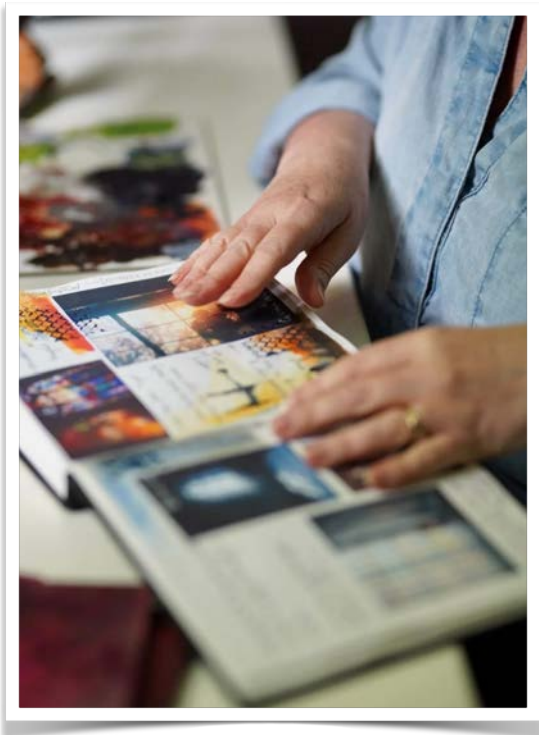
Teachers who attended the session provided very encouraging comments:

“A really inspiring session—lots of ideas I can take straight back to the classroom.”

“The exemplars were so useful. I feel much more confident in identifying and supporting Grade 7–9 potential.”

“Great to work collaboratively across the Trust. The moderation activity has really boosted consistency.”

These reflections highlight the positive impact of sharing expertise across schools.



Easter Card competition 2026:

Key Stage 3 Easter Card Competition – English Martyrs School

This year's **Key Stage 3 Easter Card Competition** at English Martyrs School brought together creativity, craftsmanship, and a wonderful sense of community spirit. Students across Years 7, 8, and 9 were invited to design and produce an Easter card that reflected the themes of **hope, renewal, faith, and togetherness**—all central messages of the Easter season.

The response from pupils was exceptional. Our Art Department was delighted to receive **a wide range of imaginative and beautifully crafted entries**, showcasing everything from traditional religious symbolism to modern graphic design. Many students incorporated scripture, stained-glass motifs, springtime imagery, and thoughtful messages of peace.

The Art department judged the entries, and were incredibly impressed by the technical skill, attention to detail, and personal expression demonstrated across the submissions. Selecting winners proved a real challenge due to the consistently high standard.

After careful consideration, awards were given for:

- **Best Overall Design**
- **Most Creative Concept**
- **Most Meaningful Message**

Winning designs will be professionally printed and be shared with neighbouring trust schools.

The competition not only celebrated artistic talent but also gave students an opportunity to reflect on the deeper values of the Easter season—**kindness, sacrifice, gratitude, and new beginnings**.

Well done to everyone who entered—your creativity continues to brighten our school community.





GCSE Art & Photography Options Evening

The recent GCSE Art and Photography Options Evening was a vibrant and engaging event that brought together prospective students and their parents to explore the creative pathways available at Key Stage 4. The evening provided an excellent opportunity for families to gain a clear understanding of what the Art & Design and Photography courses involve, the skills students will develop, and the wide range of future opportunities these subjects can lead to.

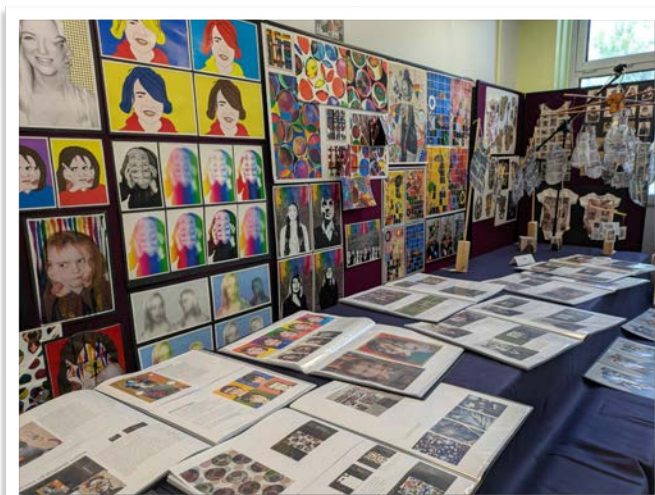
Throughout the event, visitors were welcomed into the Art Department's studios, where current GCSE work was displayed to demonstrate the depth, creativity, and individuality encouraged within the courses. Staff were on hand to talk families through the structure of each qualification, including the balance of coursework and practical exploration, the use of sketchbooks, and the ways students are supported to develop their own personal visual style.

Photography demonstrations and interactive examples of digital editing, composition tasks, and portfolio development helped students envision what studying Photography at GCSE would be like. In Art, displays of mixed-media outcomes, observational work, printmaking, and painting showcased the technical breadth of the programme.

Parents expressed appreciation for the chance to speak directly with teachers about progression routes, including A-levels, further education, apprenticeships, and careers within the creative industries. Many families commented on the inspiring atmosphere of the department and the confidence it gave them in choosing a creative subject.

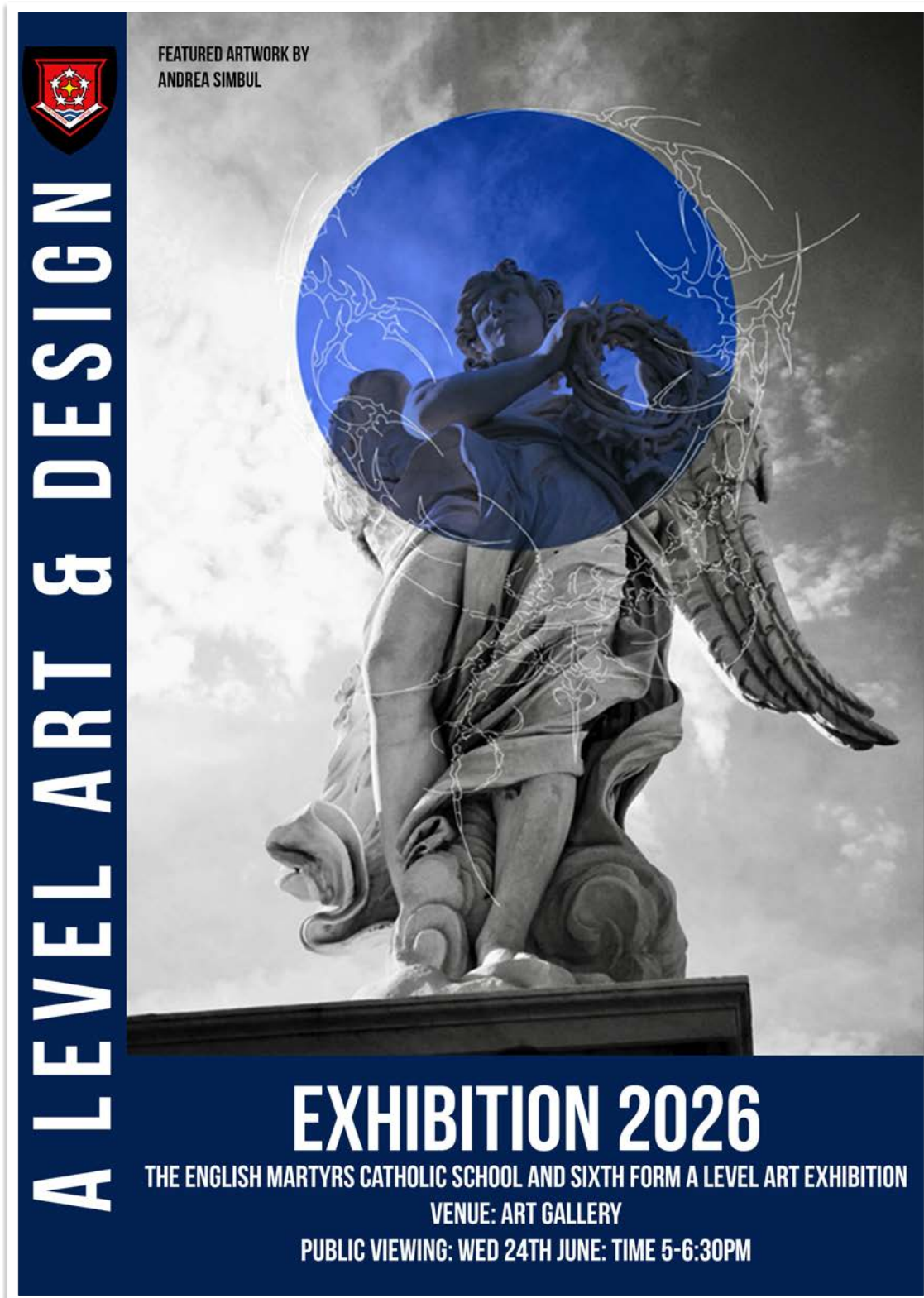
Head of Art, Mr. Meynell said "Events like tonight are vitally important, both for us as a department and for every student, to really unpick and question what they see themselves doing in the coming years. This is their opportunity to transform the remaining few years they have at EMS, and the transformational ability art brings can see them finish in incredible ways".

Overall, the evening was warm, informative, and highly successful, with strong interest from students keen to pursue their artistic potential. The department looks forward to welcoming many of these young creatives into the GCSE Art and Photography courses next year.



Summer Art exhibitions 2026

As we look forward to the summer term we also look forward to the annual GCSE and A Level Art and Design end of year exhibitions. Both events are a celebration of all student and teacher hard work, a showcasing of talent and opportunities to welcome visitors into the Art gallery. Keep an eye on the upcoming exhibitions.




A LEVEL ART & DESIGN

FEATURED ARTWORK BY
ANDREA SIMBUL

EXHIBITION 2026

THE ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM A LEVEL ART EXHIBITION
VENUE: ART GALLERY
PUBLIC VIEWING: WED 24TH JUNE: TIME 5-6:30PM



FEATURED ARTWORK BY JAMES RAZON

GCSE ART AND DESIGN

EXHIBITION 2026

THE ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM

GCSE ART EXHIBITION

VENUE: ART GALLERY

PUBLIC VIEWING: WED 10TH JUNE: 5PM - 6:30PM



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England