

# Arts & Minds Newsletter

## Spring 2022

[www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk)

# Behind The Scenes Exhibition

Take a look at the recent exhibition at Leeds Arts Gallery (page 18)

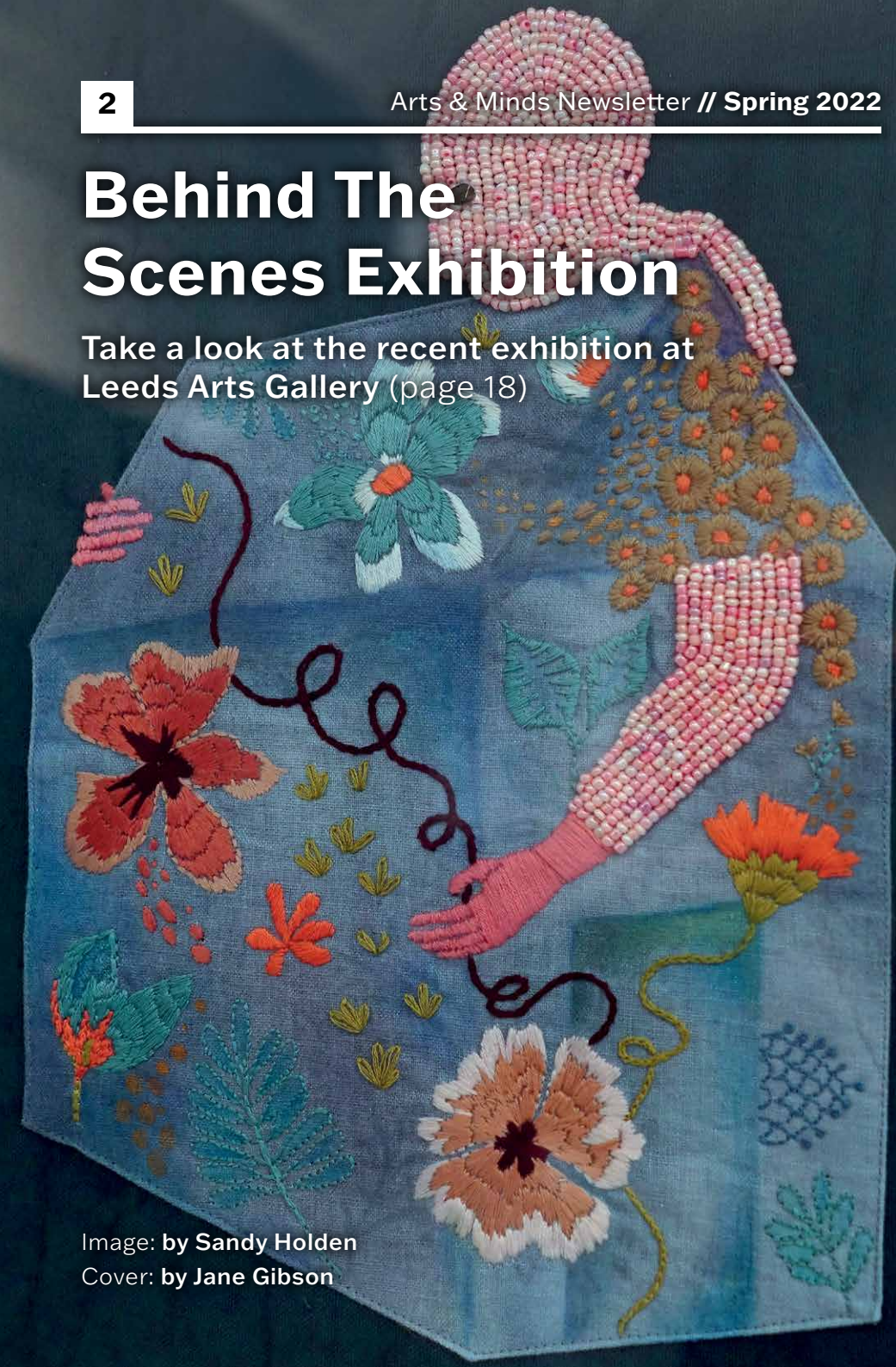


Image: by Sandy Holden  
Cover: by Jane Gibson

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# A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the spring 2022 edition of the Arts & Minds newsletter. The theme for this edition is change which seems particularly relevant at the moment. Change can be both empowering and frightening and is a fundamental part of the human condition. In the words of Elizabeth Lesser: *"How strange that the nature of life is change, yet the nature of human beings is to resist change. And how ironic that the difficult times we fear might ruin us are the very ones that can break us open and help us blossom into who we were meant to be."*

After another great Arts & Minds event at the Leeds Art Library in December when textile artist Hayley Mills Styles led a Doodle Stitching workshop (see page 8), we are excited to announce that the next Arts & Minds event will be at the Swarthmore Education Centre on the 5th April. This time, members will have the chance to try out both Needle Felting and Wire Sculpture in a fun packed creative afternoon. Please see the What's On section at the back of the newsletter for full details.

As always I am looking for ways for us all to stay connected and for creative outlets that members can engage with. If you have an idea of how to do this, or you want to connect up, please email me at: [toby@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:toby@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk). Please also keep checking the Arts & Minds eBulletin and website for more information.

# CHANGES OF MIND

**Ch-ch-ch-changes**

**Turn and face the strange**

**Ch-ch-changes**

**There's gonna have to be a different man**

**Time may change me**

**But I can't trace time**

*Changes by David Bowie*

## ONE OF THE THINGS THAT IS INEVITABLE IN LIFE IS CHANGE

We might not always like it, but we can't avoid it. Change is all around us. Changes of the season, changes of time, changes of relationships, changes of weather, changes of age, changes of minds.

Historically, change has been gradual. We've mostly had the time to adjust to any changes. In more recent times, since the fourth industrial revolution, change has been administered at a far faster rate. Nowadays, we don't get a chance to adjust to a change before another or several



other changes come along one after the other or even worse, all at once the same time!

This is when change starts to feel unnatural and akin to an assault on the sensibilities. It feels like something we want to rebuff or run away from, rather than embrace. Yup, change can kind of be described as being pretty violent these days.

When change comes to us like this, it can render us feeling powerless, which is very debilitating. It's no surprise that people suffer with high levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

One of the main 'culprits' of change in our times is technology. It isn't always helpful and is only a blessing to us if it enhances our lives, not if it enslaves us or makes us prisoners to it. In addition to this, we have the old favourites of social change and personal change. That's a whole lot of changes for people to handle and dealing with them can make people feel seriously overwhelmed.

So, what can we do to cope with changes and all that the changes entail? Come out with all guns blazing and reject them all? Cower in a corner in the foetus position and wait for it to all go away? Both are quite extreme reactions. I guess it all depends on the type of changes. Some changes need challenging and with others you may be able to lay low and let them blow over.

The secret is to know when or which change you can or should challenge or let blow over.

This is why we should remind ourselves of The Serenity Prayer, which goes like this:

**Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change**

**Courage to change the things I can**

**And wisdom to know the difference**

*The Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr*

Whenever you come upon a change that is challenging, recite The Serenity Prayer to yourself. Use it as a kind of check list to prevent unnecessary stress.

A change to how we look at things, can change how things look to us and affect us. The power of perception is real. The power of the mind is real!

You decide how you manage change. Now you know it's possible to do this, there isn't any need to let yourself become overwhelmed by the constant changes we face in this world. It may take some practice to discern and navigate change, but eventually it will become like second nature once you trust the process and yourself.

Article by **Fe**

# DOODLE STITCHING AT THE ART LIBRARY

In December, Arts & Minds worked in collaboration with Leeds Art Library and textile artists Hayley Mills-Styles, to run an afternoon of hand embroidery workshops inspired by The Leeds Tapestry and beautiful Central Library building exclusively for Arts & Minds members. Members met in the the Drawing Room at the library and used different threads to create pattern and texture in a free form 'Doodle Stitching' style, examples of which are below and opposite.





# CHANGE AND CREATIVITY

## TEXTILE ARTIST AND ARTS & MINDS MEMBER HAYLEY MILLS-STYLES REFLECTS ON HOW CHANGE CAN AFFECT OUR CREATIVITY

Change can come in many forms, from the shockwave of the COVID-19 pandemic to a change in our environment like moving house. The inspiration for this article came after we moved from Leeds to Scarborough in December 2020. It was interesting to see how a change of scenery has affected the work I create.

As an artist, I make a lot of work that responds to a place I've visited. My previous work has been inspired by visits to museums and archives. During the first few months of lockdown, when I couldn't visit my favourite places, I started to get inspired by my daily walks, creating hand embroidered maps of our routes. I also started to research in my own archive, looking at photographs from trips to Sunny Bank Mills and The Discovery Centre.

In her interview for the Spring 2021 newsletter, I chatted to Arts & Minds member Morticia about her photography, we talked about how the national COVID-19 lockdowns had changed her photography...

*"They are all titled LOMO Digital Adventures; I'm using Lomo to describe the low-resolution fixed focus cameras."*



Image: Obelisk Avenue by Morticia

*I've been using, this is in response to how some people talk about how high resolution the images they take are, as mine in comparison are 'technically rubbish' photographs."*

Because of COVID-19, it's been more difficult to get film developed, as the film shop I usually use wasn't open. I wanted immediate results plus it's quicker and easier to share those digital images with other people online."



After our move, I became inspired by the landscape and our walks on the beach and in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. I've always loved nature but didn't make much work inspired by it. My Stitchscapes (stitched landscapes) also gave me a chance to use the materials I had in my studio when I didn't feel comfortable going out to get more.



Change can be seen as a negative but it's important to think about how change can have a positive affect on our creativity. Here are a few things you could try to change the way you work:

### **TRY USING A NEW TECHNIQUE**

Using materials like newspaper and magazines can be a great way to make collaged images and found poems.

### **WORK WITH ONE COLOUR**

This can be a great way to help you focus on technique without worrying about which colours to use.

### **AN IDEAS SWAP**

Meet up with a creative friend or friends and chat about some ideas for new work. Try using the theme that they suggest and see what you can create.

You can find out more about Hayley and her work on her website: [www.hayleymillsstyles.com](http://www.hayleymillsstyles.com)



# 5 WAYS TO RECOVERY

Changing your life completely around is an incredible challenge where you need mental strength and a detailed plan to achieve it. You also need a support team which is where 5 WAYS steps up to the mark.

5 WAYS is a hub based in Leeds for people in recovery and those who are coming to the end of their treatment for alcohol or drug issues. It provides a safe and comfortable environment for people to gain support, advice and guidance. It is an informal and welcoming space where individuals can choose their own courses and activities and plan their own recovery journeys based on what they prefer and not someone else's idea of what they need.





A personal visit to 5 WAYS confirms the welcoming and feel good vibes straight away, however this should not distract you from realising and acknowledging what an extremely professional organisation this is and which is run by driven and passionate individuals.

5 WAYS is open to anyone in the city of Leeds who consider themselves to be in recovery from a substance or alcohol use problem.



Each week day the centre holds numerous meetings, group sessions and activities including arts, music, walking, wellbeing, relaxation and peer support to help anyone on the road to recovery in a non-judgemental environment. As one 5 WAYS regular commented:

*"5 WAYS has been a major part of my recovery. Just being able to come to 5 WAYS and have a cup of tea and not be isolated is wonderful. Through 5 WAYS I have been to an Open Day at Leeds University, gone on barge trips and even appeared on stage in a production of Macbeth!"*

With the easing of restrictions 5 WAYS are busy preparing new courses and workshops for the forthcoming months. With the number of people requesting help for various kinds of addiction increasing due to the pandemic and its after effects of job losses, money worries, relationship issues and mental health concerns.

If you feel as though you need to talk to someone about any addiction you may have or worried about a potential addiction then please contact the hub for advice.

## CONTACT DETAILS

**5 WAYS to Wellbeing @ the Recovery Academy**  
**43 Westfield Road, off Burley Road, Leeds LS3 1DG**

Telephone: **0113 887 2749**

Email: **[5ways@forwardleeds.co.uk](mailto:5ways@forwardleeds.co.uk)**

Facebook: **[www.facebook.com/5WAYSLeeds](https://www.facebook.com/5WAYSLeeds)**

Article by **Paul Abraham** of **[www.theartfulrambler.com](http://www.theartfulrambler.com)**

# BEHIND THE SCENES EXHIBITION

Last year Arts & Minds worked with Leeds arts Gallery, selecting a series of artworks from their collection. They met fortnightly with curators and the Art Doctors for support and inspiration, just as covid restrictions were relaxed. For many this was their first time back in the gallery for over a year, and a welcome introduction back into a creative space.

At each session a curator introduced artworks on the theme of nature. They were used as a stimulus for discussion, and the Art Doctors facilitated the sharing



of ideas and techniques that could be used to respond to the artwork. Participants created artwork between sessions and brought it along, using the group for feedback and advice, which was put together into an exhibition of its own. Below is some of the work produced during the project that formed the subsequent 'Behind the Scenes' exhibition at the gallery.

## DAVE LYNCH

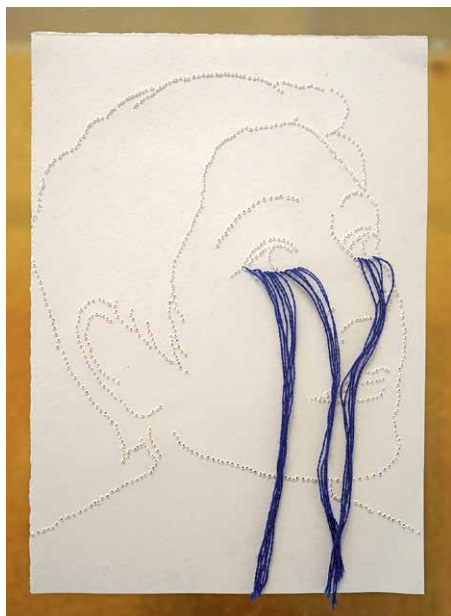
Leeds based musician and mental health activist, as the only musician taking part in the 'Behind the Scenes' project, Dave put together an EP of new tongue drum music under The Phoenix Project. Simply called 'The Gallery', the EP is directly inspired by this project at Leeds Art Gallery. It aims to capture various emotions surrounding a return to the gallery and a reaction to the variety of art on display. Dave's work is available to listen to online: [www.phoenixtonguedrum.bandcamp.com](http://www.phoenixtonguedrum.bandcamp.com)





## JANE GIBSON

Inspired by the works seen at Leeds Art Gallery during this project, in particular by 'Lamentations in the Garden' by Veronica Ryan, this series of works explores the impact of the physical, emotional and social constraints we have endured during the pandemic through repeated cycles of lockdown and consequent separations from each other.



## MARLENE

The wild flower meadow at one of the National Trust properties inspired this oil pastel and embroidery. When Marlene was little she loved to draw but in the early 1950's money was short and an HB pencil didn't make much impression on poor quality shiny paper. One day at school she was introduced to the wonderful colours of pastels and stole one! Since then she has always enjoyed drawing, painting, art history and crafts.





## MINDY

Inspired by the environment and the natural world, Mindy collects images of a subject, creating a typology in the process. She is interested in macro photography and looking for the details in an object, this method of photography gets her closer than the naked eye can see. She photographs her houseplants, learning about their every pore, vein, spike, and colour, this intimacy brings her closer to the plants.



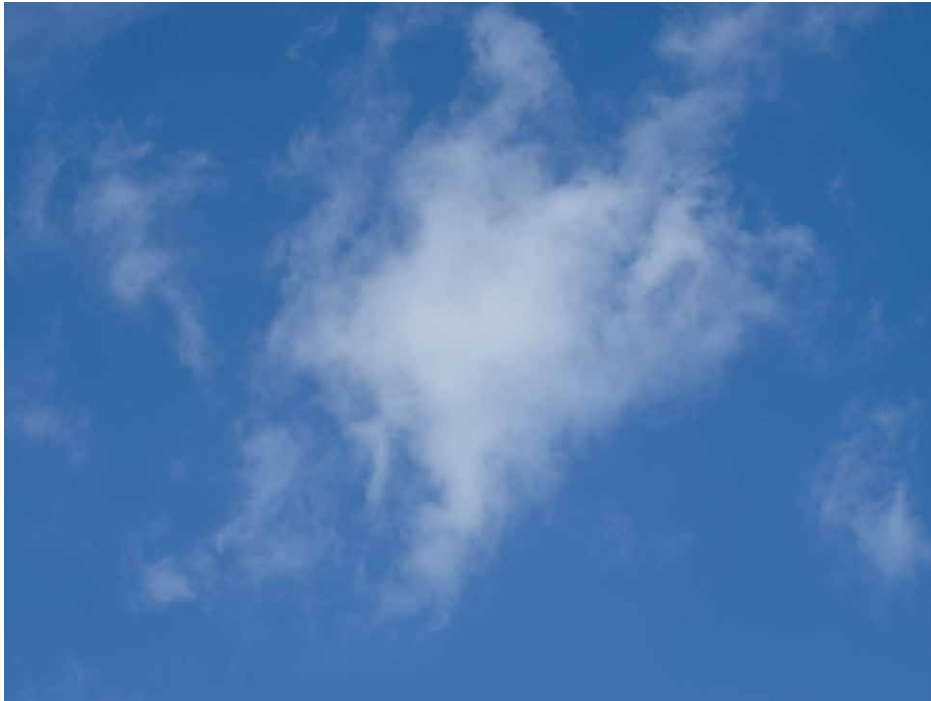
## SANDY HOLDEN

Inspired by Robert Bevan's painting titled 'Dunnes Cottage' which shows a lone figure tending the gardens around the estate, it was this scene that reminded Sandy of other artists that have lived and created work together in beautiful rural settings unencumbered by daily chores. This lone figure and others like him, will have played an important role in creating and maintaining these idyllic environments. The work puts the 'lone figure' centre stage as a reminder to acknowledge those who support others to follow their dreams and achieve their potential.





# NEVER TOO OLD TO BECOME 'ARTY'



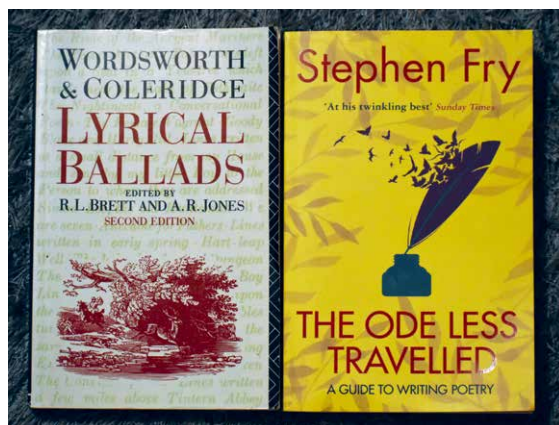
Apart from the highly successful and renowned Intake High School (now known as Leeds West Academy) which has seen singer Mel B, actors Angela Griffin and Laura Carter study there, West Leeds in the 1970s was a barren area when it came to Art in schools. I'm sure there were many teachers who would have promoted art with vigour had there been more funding and educational inclination available.

My art education in Primary School was cutting lemons in half, dipping the chosen half in to a saucer of paint and producing a poster of images of the inside structure of the said lemon. I do remember a boy called Sean who painted a wool v-necked sweater, not on canvas or paper but on the shocked boy who was wearing it at the time, much to the horror of the teacher and the hilarity of the rest of the class. Art was considered elitist and for posh kids, not the inhabitants of the council estates surrounding our schools. One wonders at how much talent was never recognised, encouraged or nurtured over the years.

I find it constantly annoying how people from certain backgrounds and jobs are pigeon-holed as to what their interests are and what they "should" watch, read or listen to. For a number of years I was a high-impact sport and fitness coach and because of my chosen choice of employment it seemed logical to many people that I must spend all my "leisure hours" listening to the "Rocky" themes, heavy rock and watching Jean-Claude Van Damme movies, while in fact many hours were spent listening to some classical music (with some Abba and Queen thrown in for balance!) and reading photography or art books etc. My photography is still influenced at times by Claude Monet, Turner and Constable.

Poetry and the lives of poets were never taught or discussed as there were never any after-class groups such as chess-playing, poetry or writing. The only form of poetry were playground recitals starting "there was a young girl from Twickers" etc. However I was always intrigued about this area of the arts and recently my

interest was intensified by accidentally finding a three-part series featuring comedian and TV host Frank Skinner and Scottish crime writer Denise Mina. The series had the pair describing the friendship and lives of William Wordsworth ("I wandered lonely as a cloud" was the only line I knew of his!) and Samuel Leigh Coleridge (who I had never even heard of!) including visits to specific areas where they had found inspiration. The passion and emotion of Frank



Skinner as he read certain poems had me immersed in an experience I never expected poetry to take me to, but it had. I now have a couple of poetry books to enjoy and who knows I may even try to write some poems myself!

My passions are photography and writing and I never expected either to feature in an arts newsletter but amazingly they have. I had met the Arts & Minds newsletter contributor Fe at an art shop in Leeds Kirkgate Market and we kept in contact and she suggested that I become involved with the Arts & Minds newsletter and invited me to a newsletter group meeting at a coffee shop in the Corn Exchange.

I admit I was worried that I would be out of my depth amid so many inspiring and creative people and how they would accept someone with a non art-educated background. I had worried unnecessarily as everyone was so friendly

and supportive and were very interested in how I use photography in mindfulness and stress-management. The confidence I have gained from being involved with the Arts & Minds team has enabled me to move forward with my photography to the point where some of my images have been used in periodicals and on websites and I've also sold some of my mounted pictures at local Arts & Crafts fairs!



I hope in the near future to be involved with collaborations with authors, artists, poets and musicians. Their talents coupled with my images could be an interesting mix. Anyone interested?

My story is nothing special or unique but I hope that it may inspire people in some small way to follow their 'Arty' dream either as a hobby or as a cottage industry. Passion is what art is all about and age or background should not be chains to hold you back.

Article by **Paul Abraham** of [www.theartfulrambler.com](http://www.theartfulrambler.com)



# WHAT'S ON...

## CONNECT & CREATE

Connect & Create is a monthly group where Arts & Minds members can connect, share skills, and take part in creative workshops led by other members. Each month's offer will be led by a different member and is free to attend. The workshops are on the **first Monday of every month** from **1pm to 3pm** with the exception of bank holidays, in which case they are on the following Monday.

The Connect & Create group meets at Leeds Discovery Centre, Carlisle Road, Leeds LS10 1LB. There is free parking if you are coming by car and the centre is a short walk from town if you are coming by public transport.

For more information, or to sign up for the workshops, email [info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk). Sessions are by RSVP only at the moment and there is a limit on numbers so please get in touch if you want to come along so we can book you a place.



## MAKE SPACE

We would love you to join us at the weekly Make Space Zoom session, where the focus is on connecting with other members, and taking time for yourself to continue with your creative project, poetry or artwork. Bring along a cuppa, and tune in for your time out session between **1.00pm and 2.00pm every Tuesday**.

Arts & Minds started the Make Space during lockdown as a way to stay connected with members while we were not able to meet up in person. Due to the success of the group, and the continued demand for online sessions, we are continuing to run the Make Space group online as other Arts & Minds groups and sessions return to meeting face-to-face.

For more information, or to sign up for the sessions, email [info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk). You will be sent a Zoom link to join in with the sessions.



# Swarthmore Taster Workshops: Needle Felting and Wirework Sculpture

An **Arts & Minds** event at the  
**Swarthmore Education Centre**

Join Arts & Minds at the Swarthmore Education Centre for an afternoon of creative workshops exclusively for Arts & Minds members!

The event includes two 2-hour workshops where you will get to try your hand at both Needle Felting and Wirework Sculpture with light refreshments served both before and in-between the two workshops.

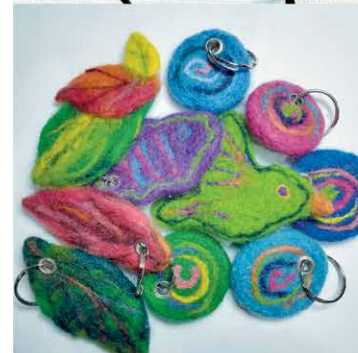
**Tuesday 5th April 2022 • 12pm to 5pm**

Venue: **Swarthmore Education Centre**  
**2-7 Woodhouse Square, Leeds LS3 1AD**



## Wirework Sculpture

Create beautiful works of art using wire and found materials. Learn how to manipulate wire using hand tools to create some beautiful, sculptural flowers. You will be able to make up to two flowers which you will be able to take home with you at the end of the session.



## Needle Felting

Introduction to felt-making – come and find out what can be made using wet and dry felting techniques and see examples. Try needle (dry) felting a small ornament, brooch or keyring fob using coloured merino wool.

Places for the **Swarthmore Taster Workshops** are limited and are by RSVP only. To book a place on the workshops please email Jane at [info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk).

You will be sent a confirmation email with all the details for the day. This event is for Arts & Minds members only. If you are not an Arts & Minds member you can join for free at [www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us](http://www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us).

[www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk) • [www.swarthmore.org.uk](http://www.swarthmore.org.uk)

This event is a partnership project between **Arts & Minds** and the **Swarthmore Education Centre**





# About Arts & Minds

Arts & Minds is a network of people in Leeds who are interested in creativity and mental health. We include carers, health workers, artists, performers, students, people who have used mental health services and OTs. We want to get people talking about how the arts can help mental wellbeing.

If you want to know more please contact us using the details below. You are welcome at any of our events or workshops, if you are a member or not. You can join Arts & Minds for free at: **[www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us](http://www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us)**

**Arts & Minds, 31 Potternewton Lane, Leeds LS7 3LA**

phone: **0113 262 3128**

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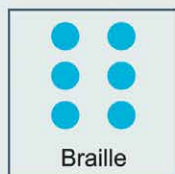
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