



Arts & Minds Newsletter

Summer 2023

www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

Arts & Minds Exhibition

The 2023 Arts & Minds member's exhibition will be at Northlight in October (page 24)

Annual Exhibition 2023

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of the Arts & Minds newsletter. We have been busy since the last edition with a fabulous event at Hollybush Conservation Centre, our regular Connect & Create sessions at the Discovery Centre and a whole host of other projects.

Please see the What's On section at the back of the newsletter for details about the next Arts & Minds event which will be at the newly re-opened Hyde Park Picture House on Tuesday the 11th July. During the event Arts & Minds members will get the chance to create their own movie sound effects and will be taken on a tour of a cinema projection room. We are also excited to announce that the 2023 Arts & Minds exhibition will take place in the real world once again at Northlight in October.

Thank you to all of the newsletter team volunteers for their continued hard work researching and writing all the articles for each edition. If you are interested in getting involved in the newsletter, either to write a one-off article or to join the team, please get in touch. 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. Please also keep checking the Arts & Minds eBulletin and website for more information.

DAY TO DAY ESSENTIALS – NOTEBOOKS

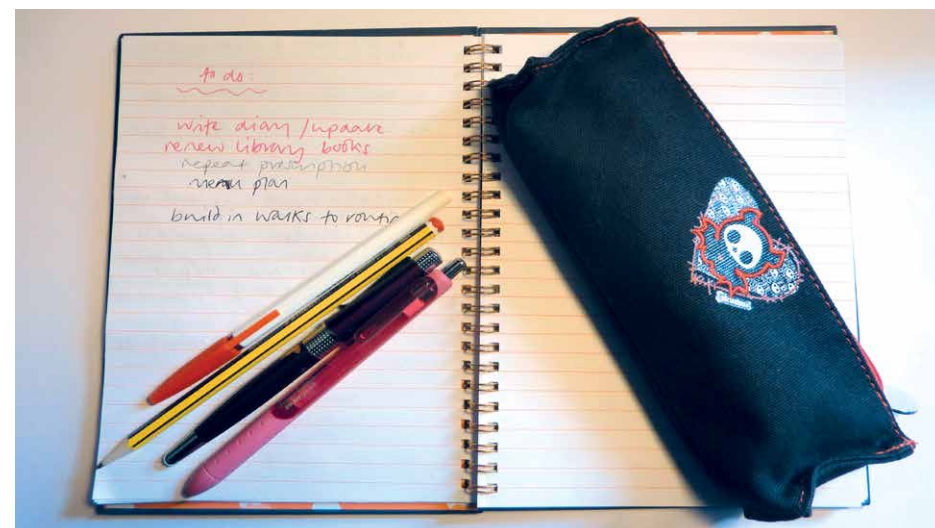
I've always been a notebook kind of person, I'm a sucker for lovely stationery and I take a small pocket-sized notebook with me wherever I go. That one is for writing shopping lists in, to do lists (that I rarely reach the end of), reminders to do things, opening hours, reading suggestions or ideas for projects that come to me on the go and that kind of thing. I don't mind tearing out a page – usually to leave someone a note or to leave a repeat prescription request at the surgery. I write in it with whatever pen I have to hand. Sometimes I write in it frequently and sometimes it can be days between entries. During lockdown times I barely used it.

My journal however only gets written in with fountain pen filled with black ink. That is whenever I feel like it, sometimes that can be consecutive days in a row, sometimes once every week or so but it can also be months between entries. It's a mix of how I feel about things that have happened, and what I feel about things coming up. It's a place where I work out where I am and where I want to be headwise. Pre pandemic I wrote it at home as well as in libraries, cafes, parks, churchyards. Now it mostly gets written in at home.



Then I have notebooks for whatever projects I'm working on whether creative or connected to my studies, these vary in size, colour and shape and get written in whatever pen I have to hand.

I had another round of counselling at the beginning of last year and before the sessions started, I got a pink exercise book and made a note of the specific things I wanted to discuss and work out. I picked a pink one so it would stand out from my other notebooks. It started as a practical list of things to discuss that I wanted help with. Over the weeks it expanded to include quotes from fiction books, articles, advice columns or social media posts that I found helpful, inspiring, funny or just plain beautiful. It gets written in with when I see something that hits home, makes me think or strikes me as something I want to keep re-reading.



I'd almost filled up the book by the time the sessions came to an end but it's become a habit I've kept on and I'm now almost halfway through a second pink exercise book. It's something that helps me keep on keeping on. I decided to keep using a pink notebook so that it stands out amongst my other notebooks.

In all my notebooks though just inside the cover I write the following quote from Lady Audley's Secret by Mary Elizabeth Braddon which was published in 1862. A book I first read nearly ten years ago and it's become one of my very favourite books. This quote from it is the one I find most helpful and insightful.

"There is nothing so delicate, so fragile as that invisible balance upon which the mind is always trembling. Mad today and sane tomorrow."

Article by **Morticia**

WORKSHOPS – WHERE TO BEGIN?

I decided to produce a workshop to help people's mental health by combining photography, mindfulness and nature, the idea was simple, but what obstacles would I face and how could I make it enjoyable?

The title would be "Improving Mental Health through Mindful Photography". I wanted the workshop to be open to everyone, no previous photography or mindfulness knowledge required. A workshop which would be equally valuable whether you took images via a mobile phone, a point and shoot camera, or an expensive all singing all dancing digital camera.

I decided that the first part would be how to take consistently good images. Without getting in to the technicalities of depth of field, shutter speeds or aperture settings. It would cover composition (a posh word for what the actual image is), showing scale and things to avoid (i.e. distractions or trees that appear to grow from the top of someone's head!).

The second part would focus on mindfulness. What it is, what it isn't, and how easy it is to use in any aspect of life and how it can reduce stress and anxiety. Finally how to combine the two parts to help a person's mental health plus some ideas to expand photography knowledge and enjoyment. The workshop now had a shape. The next issue was what materials would I need and costs. There



was also the major issue as to where I would host these workshops and again would the cost be prohibitive?

Wanting the event to be personal and interactive I decided to limit attendees to eight or ten, which required financial planning to work out ticket prices to cover my expenses. I needed to have A4 sized photographs in folders to cover all the points of the photography part of the workshop and to help explain mindfulness. Each folder of photographs would be shared by two people at each desk. Nineteen images were selected which multiplied by six (one set for myself and one set per two attendees) along with plastic display folders didn't leave much change from £140!



With already having liability insurance for my Heading Onwards business that potential extra expense was covered, however getting my three year old DBS certificate updated would cost another £19. So approximately £160 to get set-up and then room hire and travel expenses to consider.

Finding venues can be daunting but as long as you're insured and DBS checked then it should be straightforward after you've decided room size and what equipment you require to host your workshop. As my workshop would be limited to between eight and ten people, all I required was five desks and eleven chairs, no technical requirements such as projectors as this was 'old school' training.

Community hubs run by Leeds council are a great place to start when searching for venues and are reasonably priced with costs approximately £10 per hour. Private venues such as health studios average around £15/£20 per hour but have the advantage of having regular clients attending which could lead to extra ticket sales for your workshops.

Another consideration was "How do I take payments?". I researched and decided to receive payments through Eventbrite. I checked other online ticket providers but found theirs was the easiest to set up in a professional looking manner. It costs, obviously, but you remain in control of the number of tickets and price, it also produces a link to promote your event on social media platforms. One click and potential attendees can read everything about your event and book tickets with confidence. I charge £25 per person including the booking fee. After Eventbrite's commission I receive just over £22 per ticket which I'm happy with and again you are in control of how much you want to charge.

With my folders full of picture, this enabled me to show potential venues how the workshop would run. I also took along proof of my insurance cover and DBS certificate. I compiled a ten-page handout covering the topics discussed in the workshop which attendees could take home for future reference, including details of my website and my social media platforms.

Running a workshop, can be expensive to start with and could take a while to recover your initial outlay. Finding funding through grants etc. can be laborious as there are



so many trying to access ever-decreasing pots of money. You must accept that there is nothing wrong with your plans or your workshop, it just may not fit the funding criteria at that particular time.

Don't discard the chance of obtaining funding as the more workshops you run and venues you use will help you make contact with people who can point you in the right direction for future potential funding. I secured some funding through local councillors as each one is allocated some money to distribute to good causes and opportunities to help people within the city. The money is through the MICE scheme which was introduced in 1987 and provides an allocation of funds for local projects to be used for qualifying proposals by Ward Members within an annual financial limit. Grants can be made between June and March, with any unspent money being carried over to the next year.

Before my first workshop I rehearsed it to ensure the timings all worked and if there was anything which needed to be fine-tuned. Rehearsing can increase confidence before your first workshop. Create a feedback sheet to find out what the attendees enjoyed and if there was anything they would have liked covered more. Remember your workshops will evolve and feedback can help in shaping them for the future.

I have now run several workshops and received some wonderful feedback. Hopefully this article may be useful should you decide to start running your own workshops. The ultimate thing is to enjoy organising and running them and not to be downhearted if only a couple of people attend, as you'll never know how you may have changed their lives by sharing your knowledge and skills.

Article by **Paul Abraham** of www.theartfulrambler.com

POETRY CORNER

ANGEL OF THE SUN

The sunlight shoots through the forest.
 The forest's eyes are startled awake.
 The wildlife in the forest, the ponds that lead to lakes.
 They are all summoned. They move towards the light.
 The day breaks and beckons, turns away the night.
 The dawn's chorus. It heralds and it parades.
 It drums at our ears. Our eyes are on stalks.
 The birds sing songs of beauty and the forest becomes
 this beautiful talk.
 The shadows lay low. They know when they are beaten.
 It is the time of light. The nights so short and uneven.
 And I can see an angel talking to the trees.
 They are mesmerised by her beauty and words of peace.
 The forest is alive. The trees shuffle.
 Moved by her words and the ants start their scuttle.
 They go to work. The birds feed their young.
 They all follow Mother Nature, the angel of the sun.

Poem by **Daniel White**

*I wish all Arts & Minds members a lovely summer. Your
 Autistically and Artistically, Daniel.*

LEEDS 2023 – ENJOYING OUR ‘YEAR OF CULTURE’

If you haven't heard it already, LEEDS 2023 is our 'year of culture', and events and opportunities abound. Intended as a replacement for its bid to be the 2023 Capital of Culture in the EU (an attempt foiled, of course, by Brexit). LEEDS 2023 is an interactive, year-long festival of performances, art commissions, workshops, conversations, and food. Not all the events are listed online yet (some are still in development), but the LEEDS 2023 website has details about the two extensive programmes (one for spring and the other for summer):

www.leeds2023.co.uk/programme



The spring programme (titled 'Awakening') has already wrapped up. Starting on January 7th with an evening of performances in Headingley Stadium, featuring the likes of Corinne Bailey Rae (Leeds-born Grammy-winning singer and songwriter) and Simon Armitage (poet laureate and professor at the University of Leeds), Awakening included a storytelling project called the 1001 Stories Festival that focused especially on creatives (especially writers) over sixty. The spring also launched a partnership with The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) to provide support and guidance of Leeds-based community organisations seeking to apply for TNLCF's Awards for All England. (More information on this here:

www.leeds2023.co.uk/news/community-work-with-nlcf

'Playing' is the title of the summer programme (May to August), and here is where the offerings turn multifarious and experimental. April and May saw the creation of the WOW (Women of the World) Barn on Cinder Moor by 300 women and non-binary people, and on Saturday 13th May the WOW Barn festival saw a series of speakers and workshops, ranging from cross-stitch and poetry to plumbing and DJing. Meanwhile, it's hard to keep count of the festivals and performances taking place across Leeds – to name just a few: Leeds Jazz Festival, Northern Roll Festival (roller-skating), Leeds Youth Music Festival, Summer Solstice: Asian Music Festival, Black Music Festival, and Leeds West Indian Carnival.

My personal highlight in the programme will be by 'My LEEDS Summer', an initiative that sees cultural events organised across all 33 wards in Leeds. The days, spread across July and August, are organised by

local hosts who received grant money to commission workshops, performances, and exhibitions in partnership with an organisation in their ward. I'll be running a zine-making workshop for the festival at the Cardigan Community Centre on Saturday 22nd July, as part of the Hyde Park & Headingley ward celebrations.

LEEDS 2023 offerings continue through July and August and even into November. Apart from My LEEDS Summer, there are night sky observation sessions at Royal Armouries, free workshops on creative digital storytelling (e.g. video editing) and hands-on tools for theatrical performances (e.g. make up) run by Leeds People's Theatre, as well as a promised event for Day of the Dead at the end of October. Many of the events are free, pay-as-you-feel, or low cost. Overall, LEEDS 23 is a brilliant opportunity to take part in an enormous (even a little overwhelming!) array of arts and culture events right on our doorsteps.

Article by **Jessica Wright**

LEEDS
YEAR OF
CULTURE 2023

Supported by **Leeds City Council**

A HUB OF MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES

In a part of Belle Isle there is an oasis for young people to follow their musical dreams. A recent visit caused me to marvel at the hi-spec mixing and recording equipment available. With Giles and Earl exuding a calm but highly professional feel to the welcoming studio there really is a positive and creative feel produced which is sure to encourage and inspire musicians of every level.

South Leeds Youth Hub is a safe space for young people in south Leeds to take part in affordable activities outside school hours. Since the Hub began they have encouraged young people to play an active part in their development and they ensure they continue to shape the hubs future. It is their desire that the Youth Hub forms part of the fabric of the local area, involving all members of the community.

After receiving some funding they have been able to update the recording studio which can be hired by any musicians and with space for up to eight people the studio the possibilities are endless.

The music production allows a mix of free to use software and some studio specific programmes where you can learn to create your own tracks using computer software. You can then enhance these by recording live instruments or vocals over the top of them.

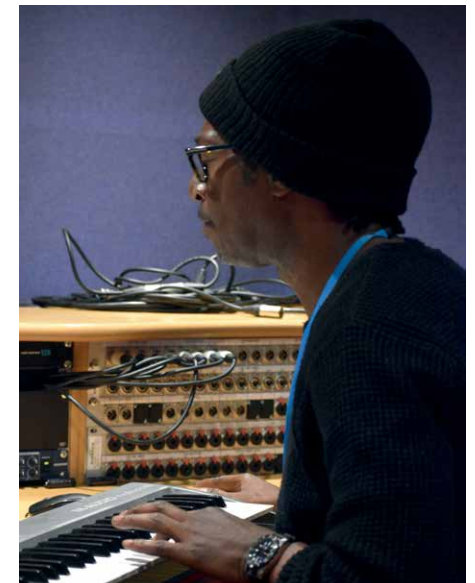
With the help of a local DJ you can step inside the fully functional recording studio and learn the basics of how to use CDDJs. The process is broken down and you will learn about the turntables, mixers and monitors separately. Then combine all this new knowledge to enable you to mix tracks in the studio.

While I was there the well known West Yorkshire duo Those2 were recording new tracks and I saw and heard at first hand what an amazing set-up the hub has available.

For more details on this and other activities available and the cost for hiring the studio, please contact them on 0113 336 7990 or visit:

www.breezeleeds.org/southleedsyouthhub

Article by **Paul Abraham** of www.theartfulrambler.com



AN ENGLISH POET IN POLAND

An account of my trip to Krakow, Auschwitz and elsewhere.

As unfashionable as it may be considered in modern times, I am proud to be English. I feel connected and even patriotic towards my own definitions and experiences of my country. Frowning, drinking tea and wading through dry wit is something hard-wired into my being, and certainly also into my work as a writer. English streetlights and slate grey Victorian-skies are as much part of my creative output as I am, and so my recent departure to Poland was a significant step outside of my comfort zone.

Nonetheless, when I arrived at Krakow airport, and was greeted by light rain, I immediately felt at home. The architectural strength of the city was awe-inspiring, even as I arrived late at night. I was pleasantly surprised by the close proximity of all within the city. At times – in one direction sits breathtakingly beautiful style of a theatre or cathedral, and opposite the stark contrast of yet equally magnificent greenery and picturesque foliage. I would often see young couples and elderly companions alike stop to take in both ends of the spectrum, sitting in awe as minutes sailed into hours.

Krakow conveyed a remarkable calmness in all it did, and it was during these moments that Blighty felt far away. Busy London, take note. I certainly think the experience of Krakow has added another perspective to my writing, and

the rhythmic beat of the street performers has brought with it new inspiration for my poetry in a structural sense.

On the contrary, one particular destination far from any sort of tranquillity on my trip was Auschwitz, which in itself holds about as much gravity as any destination can. Even the winds that sweep through Birkenau grasp the weight and the enormity of the atrocities that have been committed there in the last century. You can feel it.

I, like many others, have read the statistics of Auschwitz. I have seen the footage, taken in the facts, and yet nothing could have prepared me for the harsh certainty of seeing the infamous buildings with my own eyes and trailing the footsteps of those who met their untimely demise there.

However, the discomfort of Auschwitz is not only tangible – yet, a reality... an inescapable truth, upon the moment of subconsciously comparing the size of the fingernail scratches of deceased men, women and children, to the that of your own. I felt aside the victims of such barbarism, setting my eyes on immortalised marks of desperation, of hopelessness, and the symbolic representation of the very worst of mankind.

Once the initial unease of horror has been choked upon, and inelegantly digested, a wandering mind could be excused for drawing parallels to examples of sinful injustice that still thrives unnoticed and unvoiced in our society. Namely, one such case that came to my mind was our ever-abhorrent treatment for animals in the meat and dairy industry. I hope that one day in the not-too-distant future, heads will shake and pearls will be clutched in disgust towards the abattoir, consigned to history in the

same way as Auschwitz and the evils of the Nazi regime. Speciesism is still the greatest injustice in our society.

Aside from journeys of intense profundity, there were also some lighter ventures on my outing to Europe. Krakow for example, a jewel of Lesser Poland, boasts a rich and tumultuous history. The landlocked city of its own, the Krakow old town, took most of my time in Poland. Cobbled streets bustling with locals, with the air filled with the aroma of freshly baked bread from local café's was a joy to take in on a daily basis.

Amongst its substantial mix of both bejewelled and poignant charms, Polska also gave to be a great deal of creative freedom. I found myself on most days retiring to a park bench or the bed of my room with plenty to say to my notebook. Both the lighter and darker sides to my journey in Poland have brought something new and fresh to my writing, as the trip wraps its way around my subconscious. Subsequently, have been researching a number of traditional poetry writing styles in Eastern Europe, and fully intend to experiment.

The conclusions in my mind are relatively clear – travel is healthy for perspective of the mind and soul. Not only useful, but necessary for sanity in the modern world. In terms of my writing, my travels have not only inspired new ideas and approaches, but re-invigorated me to take time to love the process. I think both are equally important.

I look forward to once again sharing my poetry at my upcoming UK Tour in July and August this year. This is the only way I know to truly be alive.

Article by **Jacob Davies**

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. Sessions are by RSVP only 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.



SPOTLIGHT

ARTS & MINDS ANNUAL EXHIBITION GOES LIVE... AGAIN!

We are delighted to announce that this year Arts & Minds Annual Exhibition will take place in the real world, after a three-year hiatus when covid pushed us online.

This will be the 18th year of the show and will give Arts & Minds members the opportunity to showcase their work at the new Northlight Arts Centre (Inkwell's previous premises). We want to shine a spotlight on the work that you may have hidden under your bed or and/or give you the chance to create something new.

Spotlight will open on 8th October and run until 30th October to coincide with World Mental Health Day on the 10th October. Entries will need to be delivered on either Saturday 7th October (11am to 3pm) or Monday 9th October (11am to 6pm). We hope the exhibition will be a timely reminder of the important part creativity can play in people's wellbeing and recovery. However, this is not just an exhibition about mental illness, it is about the wellbeing of all. Help us by contributing to this important story.

Don't worry if you are new to the idea of art, or exhibiting, we are there to help and support you. Northlight will be running a series of workshops in the lead up to the show to explore issues such as: how to present, frame and price work: artists' statements; and marketing yourself.

These will take place on Monday 17th July (1pm to 4pm), Monday 11th September (1pm to 3pm), and Monday 25th September (1pm to 3pm).



On 17th July you can have a sneak preview of what Northlight can offer Arts & Minds members and be introduced to our exciting new vision for the show. To book on to this preview day please email:

info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

FOLEY WORKSHOP

An Arts & Minds event at the Hyde Park Picture House

Join **Arts & Minds** for an afternoon at the movies at the newly re-opened **Hyde Park Picture House**. Learn about foley – the art of creating sounds for films – and have a go at creating some sound effects yourself!

All materials and equipment will be provided and the workshop is suitable for complete beginners, no experience is necessary. As part of the event you will be taken on a tour of a projection room as well as learning about the history of the Hyde Park Picture House!

Light refreshments will be served both before and in-between the workshop and tour.



Address: **73 Brudenell Road, Leeds LS6 1JD**

HYDE PARK PICTURE HOUSE



Places for the **Hyde Park Picture House** event are limited and are by RSVP only. To book a place on the workshops please email Jane at: 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

www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk
www.hydeparkpicturehouse.co.uk

This event is a partnership project between **Arts & Minds** and the **Hyde Park Picture House**



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**

email: **info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk**

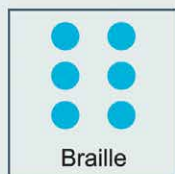
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