



Camden Schools Art Biennale

11 to 17 July | 11am to 6pm daily | FREE

Lethaby Gallery | Central Saint Martins | 1 Granary Square N1C 4AA

A new celebration of artistic achievement by schools across the borough of Camden, hosted by Central Saint Martins

Launching in summer 2024 as a pilot initiative by Camden Council, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London and Camden Learning with support from King's Cross Central Limited Partnership and the John Lyon's Charity, the Camden Schools Arts Biennale is expected to become a key pillar of the borough's cultural and educational calendar, running once every two years.

The core of the Biennale will be a week-long exhibition in the Lethaby Gallery at Central Saint Martins (CSM) featuring hundreds of artworks developed by every school and every key stage of learning in Camden – from Primary and Special Education schools, and Secondary through to A-Level.

Alongside the exhibition, a [free events programme](#) will be on offer, with a range of activities developed with families, young people and art teachers in mind.

Central to the Biennale has been a borough-wide focus on enriching art opportunities for pupils and staff – lifting standards and enhancing provision. Specialist art practitioners have been working across 24 primary schools, children have visited galleries, participated in workshops and met practising artists through links with wider organisations such as the October Gallery and the Quentin Blake Centre. We hope these arts partnerships will widen and develop as the Biennale grows.

Associated outreach and participatory work in the lead-up to the exhibition has included teacher training as well as artists engaging directly with schools in the development of work for the Biennale – lifting standards and opportunities across the borough.

The aspiration is that the event will become a sister-event to the much-loved Camden Schools Music Festival, which sees every music class in Camden perform over an evening at the Royal Albert Hall to an audience of 3,000 and live-streamed to 14,000 homes.

Objectives of the Biennale

This partnership between Camden Council, Central Saint Martins and Camden Learning aims to:

- Strengthen and inform the teaching of art in Camden schools and beyond. Specifically, working to raise the profile of art teaching and the arts curriculum.
- Showcase Camden as a centre of arts in the UK and bring a wide and prestigious audience to students' work within the borough.
- Open students' eyes to the possibilities of a career in art, design and creative practice, through exposure to the creative community around CSM and the broader networks of creative practitioners and artists in the area.
- Build links between schools, arts organisations and businesses.
- Celebrate the diversity and creativity of all of Camden's young people, including those with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) and those from underserved backgrounds.

“At Central Saint Martins, we bear witness every day to the difference that creative education can make, and to the lives it can transform. The ability to imagine a future requires hope, courage, curiosity, and the ability to experiment and play. This is what the Camden Schools Art Biennale exemplifies, and we are delighted to co-host the Biennale with Camden. It is an

important expression of our belief in creativity and the power of childhood.”

Rathna Ramanathan, Head of College, Central Saint Martins | Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts London

“Camden Council’s ‘We Make Camden’ strategy aims to create a Borough where every young person can access and create opportunity, regardless of their background or identity.

The Art Biennale, running on alternate years from the Camden Schools Music Festival, will be a brilliant addition to the cultural offer for local schoolchildren and students - and it supports Camden’s STEAM strategy to enable young people to gain the skills needed to get a career in the Borough’s tech, scientific, and creative sectors.”

Councillor Marcus Boyland, Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families, Camden Council

“Art matters to our culture, our wellbeing and our economy. The opportunity to participate in high quality creative experiences should be the right of every child. The Camden Art Biennale is raising the profile of art within schools, enriching experience, developing teacher skills and opening up new opportunities to empower our children. The Biennale exhibition will be a joyful celebration of their achievements, showcasing the talent and cultural diversity of Camden.”

Gwen Lee, Education Advisor, Camden Learning

“Why clip our wings before we can fly? We used to be famous for our burgeoning creative industries, it was our biggest export and generator of income. Creativity underpins and enriches every subject, even science. Art education is an essential part of a well-rounded education, it shouldn’t be sidelined or seen as an add on. It enriches the lives of students, giving them the tools with which to interpret and participate in the visual world.”

Cornelia Parker, Artist, 2024

“I am very honoured to support the very first Camden Schools Art Biennale. The more creativity and art we have in the world, the better our society will be. This initiative fosters a vibrant, young artistic community, enhances art education, promotes career opportunities, and celebrates the diverse talents of Camden's youth. I'm hopeful this will ensure a brighter, more inclusive future for all.”

Shantell Martin, Honorary Fellow, UAL

Alumna of Central Saint Martins and Camberwell College of Arts

“Art holds a vital place in the primary school curriculum, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and emotional expression among our young learners. The Camden Art Biennale has been a fantastic vehicle for raising the profile of art in our school and to our wider community. The opportunities it gave our children to work with professional artists were fantastic and we are

very excited to see the children's work professionally presented in a gallery setting. It will be something the children will remember forever and we hope provides them with a tangible link to the opportunities art can bring in terms of careers in the creative industries of the future. Camden schools have long championed the importance of art within the curriculum and the Biennale is another fantastic initiative to showcase all the amazing young artists in the borough. We hope it becomes a staple in the Camden educational calendar."

Don McGibbon, Headteacher, Fleet Primary School

"We are so lucky to have a fantastic art department at Hampstead School, and so fortunate to work in Camden, where the Arts have always been given such value. The upcoming Biennale reflects and celebrates the commitment of our schools and our local authority to artistic endeavour, and will act to more deeply embed it at the heart of our curriculum. It promises to be colourful, creative and compelling; we cannot wait to see our young artists' work on display."

Matthew Sadler, Headteacher, Hampstead School

"John Lyon's Charity is thrilled to see an Arts Biennale come to Camden and is pleased to be supporting children and young people to be participating in such an exciting initiative for the whole borough."

Karen Millen, Senior Grants Manager, John Lyon's Charity

About Central Saint Martins, UAL

Across art, design and performance the students and staff of Central Saint Martins create ideas, materials, and actions for a better future. Among our alumni shaping the world through creative action are Jesse Darling, Antony Gormley, Craig Green, Daniel Lee, Grace Wales Bonner, Isaac Julien, Kim Jones, Ib Kamara, Fernando Laposse, Mona Hatoum, Rene Matic, Morag Myerscough, Stella McCartney, Sandy Powell, Harris Reed, Simone Rocha, and Yinka Shonibare.

www.arts.ac.uk/colleges/central-saint-martins ; [@csm_news](https://twitter.com/csm_news)

About University of the Arts London (UAL)

UAL is Europe's largest specialist art and design university. One University made up of 6 colleges, ranked 2nd in the world for Art and Design in the QS World University Rankings since 2019. Our 6 Colleges develop students at every level, from foundation to postgraduate. Tens of thousands of students take UAL qualifications every year. Together, they are the lifeblood of the creative industries and the visionaries who will shape the future.

www.arts.ac.uk

About Camden Council

Camden Council's 'mission' for young people – as set out in the local authority's 'We Make Camden' strategy – is to create a Borough where every young person can access and create opportunity, regardless of their background or identity.

camden.gov.uk ; wemakecamden.org.uk ; [@CamdenCouncil](https://twitter.com/CamdenCouncil)

About Camden Learning

Camden Learning is an innovative and successful schools-led and area-based partnership set up for the benefit of children and schools in Camden. Formed in 2017, it is a joint enterprise between Camden Learning, Camden schools and Camden Council.

The partnership brings together teachers, headteachers and other education practitioners, to share expertise, drive improvement and develop excellent practice, learning from the best to improve outcomes and opportunities for all.

camdenlearning.org.uk ; [@CamdenLearning](https://twitter.com/CamdenLearning)

About King's Cross

King's Cross is home to 67 acres of outstanding architecture, destination restaurants and a vibrant cultural scene. At its heart is the Heatherwick Studio-designed shopping district, Coal Drops Yard, housed in a pair of artfully reimaged industrial Victorian buildings. The area's industrial past has inspired the 50 new and repurposed buildings, which are surrounded by beautifully-designed green spaces and public areas, including Granary Square and its iconic fountains. This bustling creative neighbourhood is a lively place in central London to visit day and night and has a deserved reputation as a culinary hot spot.

King's Cross is somewhere you can live, work and play – over 20,000 people now work in the area, and it has close to 2,000 homes. This includes landmark development Gasholders London, comprising 145 new canal-side apartments within a triplet of Grade II-listed cast-iron gasholder frames.

www.kingscross.co.uk ; [@Kingscrossn1c](https://twitter.com/Kingscrossn1c)

About John Lyon's Charity

John Lyon's Charity gives grants to registered charities for the benefit of children and young people. Grants are restricted to the nine London boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and the Cities of London and Westminster. Since 1991, John Lyon's Charity has distributed over 208 million to a large range of services including youth clubs, arts projects, emotional wellbeing initiatives, childcare and parental support schemes, sports programmes and bursaries.

For more information, please visit www.jlc.london