Kettle’s Yard, Castle School, Cambridge and artist Georgia Akbar have worked together to deliver an innovative creative project focused on identifying and amplifying student’s creative voices.

For 18 months students from Castle School, an inclusive school supporting SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) students, have worked with Kettle’s Yard and artist in residence, Georgia Akbar to collectively develop a new artwork for the school. Students have visited Kettle’s Yard for inspiration and collaborated with artist Georgia through participating in experimental workshops. This experience has been used by the students to inform their decisions for the final artwork; considering its location in the school and how it can be engaged with.

The result is a participatory artwork which is inspired by the play of light and windows within Kettle’s Yard. The artwork encourages visitors to look up, to interact and play with light and notice how light can change the nature or appearance of a work or space. The students have combined their interest in film-making, projection, painting, drawing and installation to create the final artwork situated within the school hall. Students have also been inspired by the artwork, to create a new music composition which will play alongside the work at Castle School.

The ART NOW project is the first of its kind for Castle School and Kettle’s Yard, celebrating and being led by student voice. The project has involved students across the school, from early years up to sixth formers.

Anne Haberfield, Acting Head at Castle School says:

“This has been such an amazing project. The project has been so accessible for our students, with each one taking their own unique learning and inspiration from a shared stimulus. Georgia Akbar has facilitated this with her creative flair, attention to detail and positive relationships with each of our students.

We are so grateful to Georgia, Kettle’s Yard, the Ragdoll Foundation, and everyone that has supported the project, it is a great creative partnership.”

Georgia Akbar says:

“It has been incredibly inspiring to spend time with students and staff at Castle school, learning what motivates the students and captures their imagination. One of the most exciting moments has been taking the work we’ve been creating ‘on tour,’ experimenting with light and projection in the hallways, library, and various rooms that students have chosen to explore throughout the school. It’s been fascinating to highlight these spaces and look at them from different angles and for students to document this process. I’m looking forward to sharing our work and this spirit of experimentation in 2023!”

For further information and images Please contact Helen Dickman press@kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk Kettle’s Yard T. +44 (0)1223 748 100 F. +44 (0)1223 324 377 kettlesyard.co.uk
Helen Creber, Learning and Engagement Coordinator and project lead at Kettle’s Yard says:

“The ART NOW project has been an incredibly inspiring project for Kettle’s Yard, extending the legacy of Jim Ede, our founder, of inspiring young people through contemporary art. The project demonstrates the power of art to empower and celebrate student voice, especially for those who traditionally may not have been provided this opportunity.”

A student who took part in the project says:

“It was really good. I like how it has all come together as one and everyone has done their own design [to contribute to the final artwork].”

Nicola MacLarty, Art Lead, Castle School says:

“It has been an incredible journey from start to finish. Together the students and Georgia have facilitated a unique multimedia student led project that can engage and excite a wide range of ages, needs and abilities.”

The artwork will be on display during the school’s annual celebration of creativity - WonderWeek (30 January – 3 February 2023) - and following this the work will be displayed at Kettle’s Yard for Twilight at the Museums on Thursday 16 February, 4.30 – 6.30pm. Visitors are welcome to explore the work during this free event. Following the Twilight event, Castle School will permanently display the artwork at their school as a proud legacy of this project.

All images: Castle School students experimenting with light, drawing and projections as part of ART NOW
Kettle’s Yard

Press Release

Notes to Editors
For all PRESS enquiries please contact Helen Dickman
press@kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk

About Kettle’s Yard
Kettle’s Yard is part of the University of Cambridge and
is one of Britain’s best galleries - a beautiful and unique
house with a distinctive modern art collection, and a
gallery exhibiting modern and contemporary art.
Supporting this is an established learning and
community engagement programme, archive, and
programme of chamber concerts. In February 2018,
Kettle’s Yard reopened after a two-year development by
architect Jamie Fobert. The new Kettle’s Yard includes
exhibition galleries, education spaces, a café and
welcome areas. Kettle’s Yard’s mission is to contribute to
society by inspiring and engaging audiences through art,
learning and research of the highest quality. We believe
that great art should not be the privilege of the few, but
for everyone. Our values reflect Kettle’s Yard’s creator
Jim Ede’s support for artists and belief in art’s power to
make us look again and change how we act in the world.
www.kettlesyard.co.uk

About ART NOW
This project has been generously supported by the
Ragdoll Foundation, an organisation that supports the
creation, appreciation and awareness of imaginative
work, reflecting the world from a young person’s point
of view.

In 2022 Kettle’s Yard invited applications to become
ART NOW Artist in Residence at Castle School. The
students were central to the selection process and chose
artist Georgia Akbar.

Georgia Akbar is an artist and facilitator who specialises
in film, animation, and participatory installation. Her
professional skills as an artist and collaborative,
inclusive approach to her practice enabled her to be
closely attuned to students’ sensory preferences. This
helped her to create sessions that gave students the
creative space to help shape the project’s direction.
www.georgiaakbar.com

About Castle School
Castle School is a special school for children from 3 – 19
years. It is a warm and welcoming community, working
together, to provide pupils with a bespoke and
therapeutic experience utilising their excellent staff and
facilities.

Castle School have developed a coherent curriculum
based on a range of compelling, creative learning
experiences, which excite and inspire their learners. They
aim to develop in each pupil aspirations to succeed and
achieve their best, while providing a foundation for
lifelong learning. The school believes that children learn
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www.castleschool.info

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