

## Paint What Matters! Art by Children & Young People in Cambridge

26 February – 9 March 2025



*Around the World in 80 Pages*, Nefeli Toxvaerd, aged 12.

Kettle's Yard is delighted to present 'Paint What Matters! Art by Children & Young People in Cambridge', a unique open call exhibition celebrating young artists aged 4–21 who live, study or work in Cambridge. Over 500 artworks responding to the prompt, 'what matters to you today?', will be displayed across the Kettle's Yard galleries from 26 February – 9 March 2025, capturing the hopes, concerns and insights of the next generation.

Featuring submissions to the open call alongside artworks produced with community partners and local schools, 'Paint What Matters!' will be a testament to the diversity and imagination of the city's young artists. Spanning painting, drawing and collage, the exhibition will journey through themes both personal and universal, from love and care for family and friends, to shared concerns about the environment and current affairs.

References to climate change and nature will reoccur throughout. Maria Acosta-Rokkou, 8, calls for action in her work, *Save the Earth!*, while a painting titled *Love the Ocean and Be Thankful* by Lilly, 10, depicts the sea. The latter was created in a Kettle's Yard workshop organised with young carers at the Cambridgeshire charity Centre 33. In her artist statement Lilly says, "I feel that people should respect the ocean because I have seen so many articles where people have thrown rubbish in the ocean. I want people to look at this painting and say 'wow' and then they will respect the ocean." Through these artworks, glimmers of hope will emerge as young people tackle difficult subject matter with a sense of resilience.

Issues surrounding women's rights and gender equality will feature in works by Lily Crosbie, 19, and Elisa Tracol, 18. Crosbie's *Walk Me Home* draws attention to women's safety through an evocative self-portrait, whilst *Fight for Rights* by Tracol comments on the importance of

visibility and collective organisation.

Nearby, Zebbie Halban-Taylor, 10, will exhibit a drawing titled *Family*. In his accompanying artist statement, he says, 'Family matters because they complete the joy in my life.' Similar sentiments will run throughout the exhibition, including in 20-year-old University of Cambridge student Anna V's painting, *Four Friends on Grantchester Street*, which illustrates the friendships the artist has formed while studying in the City.

'Paint What Matters!' builds on the legacy of Jim and Helen Ede, who created Kettle's Yard. They hoped the house and gallery would become a place of reflection, conversation and inspiration for all who visited, and especially children, young people and students in Cambridge. The Edes included artworks by children in their collection, treating their work with equal significance and value as every other painting, sculpture and object displayed in the Kettle's Yard house. For the duration of 'Paint What Matters!', a group of paintings by Amanda Hicks (b. 1951, UK) will be shown in the house. Her family were friends with the Edes, who acquired paintings she made as a teenager.

In celebration of the exhibition, Kettle's Yard will partner with Engage (National Association for Gallery Education) and host a panel discussion on Wednesday 5 March. Jane Sillis, Director of Engage, will invite a panel of Cambridge experts to share and discuss positive ways forward for young artists. 'Paint What Matters' will also be accompanied by a special guide created by North Cambridge Academy Year 8 Arts Ambassadors, inviting visitors to explore the artworks further through open questions, provocations and activities. Visitors to the Kettle's Yard house will be able to follow a short tour of artwork by children and young people on the Bloomberg Connects app.

**For further information and images**

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Kettle's Yard thanks its project partners for their enthusiastic participation: Arbury Primary, Cambridge City Council Community Development team at Brownsfield Community Centre, Castle School, Church of the Good Shepherd, Centre 33, North Cambridge Academy and Romsey Mill.

### Notes to Editors

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### About Kettle's Yard

Kettle's Yard, part of the University of Cambridge, is a leading gallery and unique house with a remarkable collection of 20th-century art. Its founders Jim and Helen Ede believed in art's ability to transform lives, a vision upheld today through critically acclaimed exhibitions, pioneering community and learning programmes, and research of the highest quality. Our aim is to offer an inspiring and enriching experience for everyone who visits. Find out more and get involved at: [www.kettlesyard.cam.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.cam.uk).

### About Community & Learning at Kettle's Yard

'Paint What Matters!' is both a demonstration and celebration of Kettle's Yard's longstanding commitment to encouraging and enabling children and young people to make art and enjoy the work of modern and contemporary artists. Led by Karen Thomas, the thriving Community & Learning Programme is a fundamental part of Kettle's Yard's DNA. Taking place both at Kettle's Yard and in local schools and community settings, creative activities are often inspired by the house or the current exhibition and led by contemporary artists. The programme continues to reflect Jim and Helen Ede's belief that early life experiences of making and engaging with art enrich lives and enhance opportunity.



*Grandad*, Thomas Lynas, aged 8.



*Four Friends on Grantchester Street*, Anna V, aged 20.



*Love the Ocean and Be Thankful*, Lilly, aged 10.

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