

# Creative programmes and activities 2024 - 2025

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# Summary

2024/25 was a busy and enjoyable year for our team and our participants. We ran 14 workshops across the year attended by 271 people living with dementia and their companions, which is 49% more than in 2023/24. 50% of our participants this year were returning to us having attended previous workshops, ~30% were on their third or more programme and over 10% have joined us for five or more programmes.

We launched our second year-round programme in Camden at Swiss Cottage Library. Our on-going programme in Southwark continued with five programmes at Tree House, Elephant and Castle.

We had fun online with 41 weekly Art Wednesday sessions, providing art-based activity and social connectedness for those participants unable to get to a workshop in person.

We continued to collaborate with five key organisations: The British Museum, Central Saint Martins, Cockpit Studios, The Royal Collection and Lendlease. And we were delighted to begin new relationships with the English National Ballet, Camden Libraries and The Arsenal Foundation.

Some of the wonderful artwork produced by our participants and our talented artists was displayed at two exhibitions this year. This was a lovely celebration of our participants' achievements.

We also collaborated with Lendlease and NRS Healthcare to provide artwork for their offices and supported Donmar Warehouse with information about dementia for their team as they prepared for their production of Backstroke. These types of activity give us the opportunity to spread the word about Arts for Dementia to make more people aware of what we do and how they can join a workshop or get involved to support us.

Attendees at our early-stage dementia awareness training for the arts grew again this year with 103 people attending our eight training days, an increase of 23% more attendees than the prior year.



**14 Workshops**



**103 people trained**



**271 beneficiaries**



# Year-round programmes

## Art at the Tree House - Southwark

Five programmes lasting ten weeks each:

### 1. Textiles with Gussi Philippou

In this programme we learnt about core textile principles. We explored various techniques for working with textiles, including collage, dying materials, traditional mending techniques and weaving.

*"I just wanted to let you know that our weekly art class is the highlight of our week. It's often quite challenging these days, for both mum and I, and the class gives us a little window of light and creativity each week to look forward to."*

**Carer participant**



### 2. Mixed media with Phoebe Kaniewska

Over the course of this programme our artist and facilitator, Phoebe Kaniewska, led us through experimental drawing and mark making techniques. We created drawings with charcoal and sticks, we experimented with watercolour on paper and cloth and we even made our own colour pigments to paint with from natural sources like flowers and coffee.

*"We really enjoyed today. Dave's art spoke volumes about WHO Dave is, deep down; inside, our creativity really does start to bubble up from our very souls.."*

**Carer participant**



### 3. Dance with The English National Ballet

The English National Ballet introduced our participants to music and movements from Carmen, accompanied by a guitarist. People loved exploring the characters in the ballet, using silk scarves as a toreador's cape, creating their own rhythms with sticks or their feet, and dancing together, in pairs and even some solos!

*"Having the vision to see Dance, Drama and Music as part of Arts, was great: the way both Marie and Jane use their skills and talent to help us all to maximise our physical and creative potential has brought another facet of joy to our lives."*

**Participant with dementia**



### 4. Textiles with Alice Burnhope

In these sessions led by Alice Burnhope we learnt a number of brilliant textile art techniques including fabric dyeing, using natural pigments, collaging using a variety of textured materials, rope making and even embroidery, learning stitches of the trade!

*"This is such a special place...I loved every minute. I felt very welcome, I mean, it's just so welcoming to anybody and everybody who's wanting to have a try. And I love it."*

**Participant with dementia**



## 5. Print making with Kethi Coupland

Kethi Coupland guided us as we explored several different print-making techniques, experimenting with bold colours and interesting themes over the course of this programme. The sessions took us through mono printing, lino printing, Cyanotype and more.

*"You're very supportive, I feel very welcomed, thank you for all your help"*

**Participant with dementia**



## Art in the Library - Camden

Two programmes lasting ten weeks each:

### 1. Print-making with Melissa Fry and Lucy Grainge

With artists Melissa Fry and Lucy Grainge guiding us, we explored bold colours and a wide range of ideas over this ten-week programme. We got a chance to try lots of different print-making techniques including lino printing, screen printing and Cyanotype.

*"Oh, I'm always enjoying myself here"*

**Participant with dementia**



### 2. Dance with The English National Ballet

We enjoyed a magical ten-weeks of movement and music with a top dancer and a fabulous pianist from the English National Ballet, who introduced us to music and stories from famous ballet productions. We were guided through a series of dynamic movement exercises which could be done seated or standing and used percussion instruments to explore sounds and rhythms to accompany our dance.

*"It's been good to have repeated dance routines and music each week to help reinforce what we are learning. I especially enjoyed the ballet port de bras, and how elegant everyone looked whilst doing it. I liked having the printed pictures and also the link to the ballet piece. It was also good having the disco at the end, this is a nice way to finish the sessions"*

**Participant with dementia**



# Short-term programmes

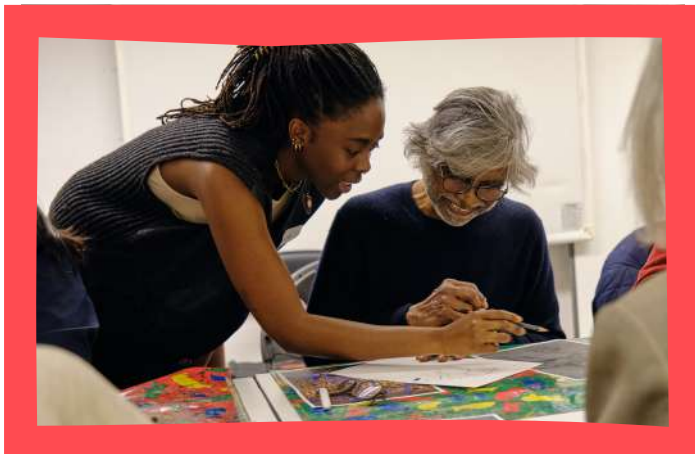
Four to eight week programmes:

## British Museum

### Michelangelo: Drawings and poems

During the British Museum's Michelangelo Exhibition our participants were guided through the exhibition by one of the curators, exploring the drawings, sculptures, letters and poems he created in his later years.

Artist Sola Sodeke then encouraged our participants to respond to the themes and artworks in the exhibition including architecture, religion, ageing and poetry. Each session over the four-week project focussed on difference art techniques and skills, from life drawing (the model was dressed!) to gold leaf. Participants also had the opportunity to visit the exhibition to see the artworks and speak with the curators.



## Cockpit Studio Bloomsbury

### The Art of Craft

This eight-week programme gave participants a chance to try their hand at a number of new crafts including ceramics, mosaic making and silversmithing from the brilliant resident makers at the Cockpit Studios.

*"Thank you for a great, interactive course. Motivated by being part of the group. I have more confidence again to carry on with creative projects myself and it's giving me something to look forward to every Friday."*

**Participant with dementia**



## Cockpit Studios Deptford

### The Art of Craft

This eight-week programme gave participants a chance to try their hand at a number of crafts. Six of the brilliant resident makers at Cockpit Studios ran workshops introducing our group to their different artistic practices. At Cockpit Studios' newly refurbished Deptford site we learnt weaving, mosaic making, ceramics and working with yarn, which we dyed and wrapped. We learnt several new skills including using tools to create our own mosaic tiles and embroidering with the yarns we had dyed. Participants developed their skills over the sessions allowing them to create some beautiful and joyful finished pieces from each craft.

*"Both my mum and husband were shocked at what skills they had that were hidden, and by attending this programme their abilities and skills were awoken."*  
Carer participant



## Buckingham Palace

### Explore the State Rooms

We were delighted to visit Buckingham Palace for this programme, which gave participants a chance to explore three of the magnificent State Rooms. The wonderful Palace guides, Dawn and Catherine, helped us to discover a new room each week, observing the architecture and interiors whilst learning about the room's history and stories. We took inspiration from the highly adorned spaces to create our own artworks - one week we were in the Throne Room, and designed our own thrones, another week we were in the Blue Drawing Room enjoying the ceramics, and designed our own vases.

*"A really great treat going to Buckingham Palace and being able to sit and draw for a while. I had forgotten what a joy and balm to the soul it all was. We both really enjoyed meeting and being guided by the wonderful people from Arts for Dementia and the palace."*  
Carer participant



## The Arsenal Hub

### 3D Sculpture

We had a ball during this eight-week programme experimenting with different sculptural materials to create pieces inspired by the Arsenal Archives. Our participants got to see and handle memorabilia, including some of the Arsenal trophies, and create sculptures informed by them. Local artist Julia Clarke introduced different techniques and ideas each week, including wire model making, clay ceramics, papier mâché and drawing (just to name a few). The clay model making was a particular favourite and participants made several personalized trophies each, which they inscribed with mottos or phrases that felt meaningful. Julia referenced the artwork of Marice Cumber during some of our sessions and we were delighted when Marice paid a surprise visit during our last celebratory session. The programme also included a wonderful tour of The Emirates Stadium, with a look around the dressing rooms and a quick sit down in the executive boxes, it's fair to say we got a real kick out of it!

*"It's been fantastic, it's a full art course. It's just incredible!"*

**Participant with dementia**



## Central Saint Martins

### Art School

This four-week intergenerational programme was taught by Central Saint Martins' fine art students, led by their brilliant tutor Shepard Manyika. During the course we created drawings responding to sounds, explored a series of experimental mark-making techniques, designed record covers and produced a collaborative response to music using collage. The programme culminated in an exhibition featuring the artwork made by our participants curated by students from Central Saint Martins. This was accompanied by audio captured during the sessions, including a medley of conversations, music and sounds created using instruments.

*"Just brilliant. Encouraging. Inspired. Accepted. Very grateful."*

**Participant with dementia**



# Art Wednesday

## Weekly online art workshop

Our weekly online workshop sessions continued throughout the year, providing creative experiences and community to people who have restricted access to arts opportunities due to location or mobility. They are also attended by those who are active but value another engaging activity each week. Our weekly sessions are run by Arts for Dementia staff, talented artists, or partners from museums and galleries. Our hosts this year have included curators and guides from leading art organisations and museums such as the English National Ballet, the British Museum, Chelsea Pensioners and the Wallace Collection. Their talented facilitators have engaged and enriched us, bringing their buildings, exhibitions and collections to life.

*"These sessions are so so lovely, it's really good for your mental health and brain cognition. It's so good for socialising and wellbeing"*

**Participant with dementia**



# Training

## Early-stage dementia awareness training for the arts

We delivered eight training sessions for arts facilitators and organisations. This included three in-person days (at the English National Ballet, Swiss Cottage Library and London Zoo), three online days and two bespoke training sessions; one for artists at Cockpit Studios and one for art students as part of our Art School programme at Central Saint Martins. We continue to deliver training both virtually as well as in-person, to reach attendees across the UK.

*"I felt that I gained a deeper understanding of dementia as a diagnosis and how creativity and community has a huge impact."*

*"It was very useful for both my understanding of dementia and of how to approach workshops for the public."*

Training participants



# Exhibitions

## Tree House

In celebration of the year-long programmes we held at The Tree House community space, we held an exhibition showcasing the artworks made by people with early-stage dementia and their companions. On display were a range of paintings, textiles, ceramics, video, and our first print collection of participants' artworks were available for sale. Featured artworks were created during our workshop programmes at The Treehouse.



## Women in Art Fair

We were delighted to be selected as a charity partner for The Women in Art Fair and hosted a stand where we exhibited and sold our print collection alongside works from professional artists who support our work. We also displayed photographs of our workshops. This was a thoroughly enjoyable event to be part of and provided a good platform to grow our networks of both donors and those involved in the arts.



# Collaborations

## NRS Healthcare

We worked to a brief developed in collaboration with NRS Healthcare to create a permanent art installation for their office in Sidcup. We then worked with an artist to develop a workshop process that would deliver six pieces of artwork tailored specifically to suit the brief and the space where they would be displayed. The team of our participants that wanted to be involved in the project really enjoyed creating stencils and leaves, then using spray paints for an immediate, visual impact, and worked collaboratively to create the final pieces. As they developed their confidence in using the spray paints the artworks became more cohesive and colourful!

## Lendlease

Having provided the venue for our Tree House programme and visiting some of our exhibitions, Lendlease asked if our participants would like to create artworks to be displayed in their head office. We worked with print-maker Melissa Fry to deliver two workshops where people affected by dementia could explore places and objects that were meaningful to them, and create art inspired by those. Sadly, with Lendlease selling their UK arm, those pieces are still waiting to be installed but we hope to do that in 2025-26.

## Donmar Warehouse

We worked to support the production of Backstroke, a play by Anna Mackmin, being performed at the Donmar Warehouse. The play's main characters are a woman who is living with dementia and her daughter. We provided three interactive dementia awareness workshops for the team working on the production. We also wrote an information and support leaflet about dementia, which was made available to the audience.

