



LEABROOKS WITTER



July 1st 2021

The Artists' Forum at Leabrooks Arts Complex. Keeping in Touch

We have, quite rightly, applauded the exceptional efforts of the NHS and key workers throughout the pandemic, now **let's hear it for the arts and artists!** We make music of a kind, sing, dance and create images almost before we use language productively but most of us don't become composers, rock stars, ballerinas or fine artists. This initial creativity is often repressed as we grow older and, sadly, this decline is sometimes abetted by the education system – but at what cost? Everyone benefits from the chance to express themselves freely and the arts, in all its manifestations, provide a wonderful range of opportunities for self expression and thus sound mental health. Contact with the professional arts also helps in this respect. A visitor to the Gallery last week said, 'I feel more peaceful here, surrounded by all this lovely art, than I've felt in weeks.'

So, more power to artists of all kinds, the seen and unseen, those who sell and those who don't; your commitment is now needed more than ever! CBJ



This is an image of the bridge over the pond at Leabrooks Arts Complex. It's a digitalised photo, using the Pikazo App and in the style of Monet. But is it art??

Art by Jack, aged 5 – nearly 6

Jack drew this picture of his parents yesterday. It's a joyful, uninhibited image in crayon which took some thought and discussion with his Mum and little brother, Alfie. It gave him and the rest of us great pleasure. That's what all art's about!



Geoff Futter, a highly accomplished artist, wrote the following explaining how he gained confidence and took steps to inform the public about his work. As a result visitors, sometimes in groups, have been to the Gallery to see his work, and the work of other artists. (The three images on the left are from Geoff's Lockdown Exhibition.)

'As a comparatively new artist at Leabrooks I thought that a bit of promotion of my work wouldn't go amiss. The trick would be to present the media with an interesting story that they would be happy to publish. In my case it was about using lockdown time to improve my work. I felt that there was something missing from my work so I sought professional advice, watched demos on YouTube, read extensively and painted for 4 hours every morning until I discovered how to improve my art, making it, in my view, worthy of sharing.

This story was given to both the Derby Telegraph and Radio Derby. The Telegraph liked the story and published a pleasing article, complete with pictures, one of me at the easel painting. Radio Derby sent the presenter of the early morning show, Andy Twigge, to record interviews; he proved to be a charming and sincere man. He loved my work and interviewed both Carol and myself at Leabrooks. The interviews went on air the following week and the producer seemed to be really pleased with them. A number of people who saw the article and listened to the interviews on the radio then visited the gallery.

The media seems to be looking stories like this. If you're interested in doing something similar your approach needs to have a positive message with a strong human element which will engage readers and listeners. I first rang the Telegraph and Radio Derby, asked to whom I should send my story and was given appropriate email addresses. I was also asked for my contact details. I then got a call from a researcher at the Derby Telegraph who asked me a variety of further questions that helped them put the article together in a way that would be interesting to their readers.

Andy Twigge of Radio Derby asked some thoughtful and pertinent questions about myself and talked about some of my paintings individually before asking about the Gallery in general.

If anyone fancies promoting their work in the ways I've described I'd be happy to help you. You can contact me through the Gallery.'

