

Youngsters choose works from national collection in a project to help boost art education in schools

YOUNGSTERS from Newlyn School have become the temporary “owners” of some important British works of art.

The pupils have chosen ten works from the national Arts Council Collection, which includes more than 8,000 works in a range of media, to put on display in West Cornwall.

The move came after Newlyn Art Gallery and The Exchange, in response to what it described as a “growing crisis in arts education”, asked local schools what it could do to change that situation.

Newlyn School, whose pupils are regular visitors to the gallery, asked if it could support the delivery of basic art skills within their curriculum.

Cat Gibbard, the programme curator and learning lead at Newlyn Art Gallery, said: “We felt an exciting way to do this would be through our partnership with the Arts Council Collection, in the form of a loan of works to the school for a whole year

“We worked with a Year 5 class who chose works they felt would inspire the school community. Their choices were thoughtful and, at times, provoked passionate discussion, which they agreed would be interesting to continue during their stewardship of the works.”

The school’s head teacher, Isabel Stephens, said: “Our children were offered a rare opportunity when they were given the power to choose artwork to be displayed in school and in Newlyn Art Gallery.

“It has become a lesson in the value of culture. Our children feel so privileged that we have been entrusted with this artwork; they feel valued; they feel they have a voice. The impact on their self-worth has been significant.”

And councillor Julian German, the leader of Cornwall Council, said after a recent visit to the school: “I was fascinated to hear how involvement in the project has transformed the pupil’s confidence and how the



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Simon Maycock, cornwall-ideas.co.uk

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teaching staff’s expectations about the value of the project have been far exceeded.

“It’s a project that powerfully demonstrates the essential place of art in every young person’s education. I’m delighted that Cornwall Council is able to support this inspiring and innovative project.”

In June, the school will lend the works to the gallery, helping to create a “Palace of Culture” and transforming Newlyn Art Gallery into a setting for three weeks of art-based activities, programmed by artists –

or cultural secretaries – as directed by the children.

Jill Constantine, from the Arts Council Collection, said: “This innovative idea, whereby the school becomes the temporary owner of the artworks and then lends them back to Newlyn Art Gallery, reflects our founding principles – that the Arts Council Collection truly belongs to everyone.”

The nine works from the collection which the pupils have chosen to be on display at the school are paintings called The Kestrel, by David

Woodford; Christmas Tree, by William Gear; Bathing, by Stass Paraskos; Oving Footpath, by Paul Millichip; The Shore, by Norman Adams; and People and Water, by Clive Hodgson, plus sculptures Cock, by Bernard Meadows; Head with Blue Rabbit, by Alan Grimwood; and Cat, by Robert E Clatworthy.

A tenth work chosen by the pupils, Hyde Park, by Julyan Trevelyan, will only be seen as part of the Palace of Culture, which will be at Newlyn Art Gallery in June.



» Left: Youngsters at Newlyn School discuss one of the works of art on loan to them from the Arts Council Collection. Above: Cornwall Council leader Julian German visited the school to discuss the project. Right: Pupils in discussion with James Green, director of Newlyn Art Gallery and The Exchange

