

Teenagers Work on an Art Project for the Community

Teenagers at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class, have spent the last four weeks working on an art project for the community, where their final artworks are being shown alongside those of other contributing artists'.



'Friend chatting at Mitcham's Corner' Teenagers

work on an art project for the Cambridge community
by creating sculptures from old mannequins

Arts organisations and artists, including artists at [Cambridge ArtWorks](#) studios, have been transforming mannequins into artworks - which have been placed around Mitcham's Corner, Cambridge, and will be shown during the month of July 2014. The project has been coordinated by ['Friends of Mitcham's Corner'](#) - who have been campaigning to reinstate a sense of identity and community to this residential corner of Cambridge, once a vibrant part of the city and home to a well known clothes shop run by the Mitcham family.



Map of Mitcham's Corner and artists and organisations participating in the 'Mitcham's Models' project by Jon Harris

Students Work on Two Mannequins to Create 'Friends at Mitcham's Corner'

This project has been a very good opportunity for students to work with a brief:

- to work as a team to create art works out of mannequins,
- the objects to be weather and vandal resistant and stand for a month outside,
- that the final artwork should form a positive, insightful comment about the neighborhood, community and place and take on board some of the broader aims of the project.



Students of AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class work as a team creating artworks for the Mitcham's Models Project

Paddy Mannion, who is coordinating the Mitcham's Models project, arranged for the models to be spray painted by Morley Brothers in Milton, so that the mannequins were strong and weather proof. I Googled top colours for teenagers 2014 and came up with 'Radiant Orchid' and Dazzling Blue'.

Students worked for four weeks on the models in their hour and

a quarter long sessions. I ran some extra sessions at the end of the project, when it was clear that we needed more time. During the first session, I worked a lot with the teenagers brainstorming and finding out how they wanted to approach the project and which were their preferred materials to work with. I used 'post-it' notes in an exercise to find out how the teenagers felt about working with the models and what their first impressions of them were. I was keen to make sure that everyone wanted to participate and that they had ownership of the project. In this way, we uncovered what the key themes emerging were, what the teenagers' expectations were and which materials they wanted to explore most.



Students put post-it notes on the mannequins to try and understand a bit more about how the group wanted to approach the project

Students also had a chance to draw the mannequins and work on ideas in their sketchbooks.



Jasmine and Ella sketching ideas for the Mitcham's Models on the first day of the project



Libby draws the Mitcham's Models



Libby's drawings of the Mitcham's Models

The following session we spent building armatures out of bamboo, cane, wire and tape.



Mia and Anna get to work creating structures out of cane and wire



Students start work on the models using cane, wire and tape to create armatures

We then covered the armatures in plaster and modroc to make them strong.



Working on the model in plaster and modroc



Students working in plaster and modroc to make skinny jeans



Student works with plaster and modroc on the model

The theme of two teenaged friends meeting and talking together began to emerge and it became clear as we worked that the two models needed to stay together.



At the end of week three the models armatures had been covered with a first layer of modroc and plaster



Student works - carving into the plaster to create hair



Work in progress with skinny jeans and hair do



Students then painted the models with acrylic paint. Tilly paints the hair



Students paint the back of a model



Mia, Ella and Ingo paint the skinny jeans



Students work on the back



... and the dress



Many thanks to Pisces and TTS for their continuous support

Many thanks to Libby, Ingo, Jasmine and Ella who put in extra hours, so that the models could be completed in the short time. Students have had the idea, that the mannequins need to be 'accessorised' - which is developing into the idea of making their models have an interactive element to project.

So, if you are passing by Mitcham's Corner in July, do try and find AccessArt Experimental Drawing Class's 'Mitcham Models' and share a friendship or loom bracelet with them!



Friends chatting at Mitcham's Corner by teenagers at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class for Teenagers



Friendship at Mitcham's Corner

Many thanks to TTS and Pisces The Art Specialist for providing the materials for this workshop.

