Changing lives: inspired by art archive to become



Sixteen-year-old Channah took part in a National Lottery-supported youth heritage project and discovered the confidence to make her own artwork, lead a talk and present an exhibition.

As Camden Arts Centre celebrated its 50th birthday year last year, Channah joined their newly formed Youth Collective Group, set up as part of its Living Archive project. Channah had never visited the gallery before.

“I’d never done anything outside of school before to do with art or heritage so I was really intrigued to join the project…I’d never used an archive and I’d never heard of a vitrine before.”

As well as exploring an exhibition archive, Channah had the chance to discuss her ideas, make her own artwork including prints and a sound piece, curate a vitrine of objects, take part in a group exhibition and give a public talk. Alongside the items and artefacts in the archive, she found inspiration and the confidence to develop her own art practice.

> “It made me grow in confidence and have more self-esteem.”
>
> - Channah

“I went on to curate my own vitrine and I really enjoyed talking to the group about the items that we liked and what we related to in the collection. Kara Walker’s exhibition at Camden Arts Centre inspired me and made me think about my own history and my ancestors, about where I came from.”

Proud and independent

Camden Arts Centre has a history of enabling people and artists to make things and has exhibited a high number of female artists. Its very first exhibition was called The Artist at Work and its programme also supports artists-in-residence.

“Now I feel more confident about talking about my artwork. I haven’t taken part in any exhibitions before and as part of the Youth Collective Group I created my first exhibition and I found it very exciting – I felt proud and independent.”

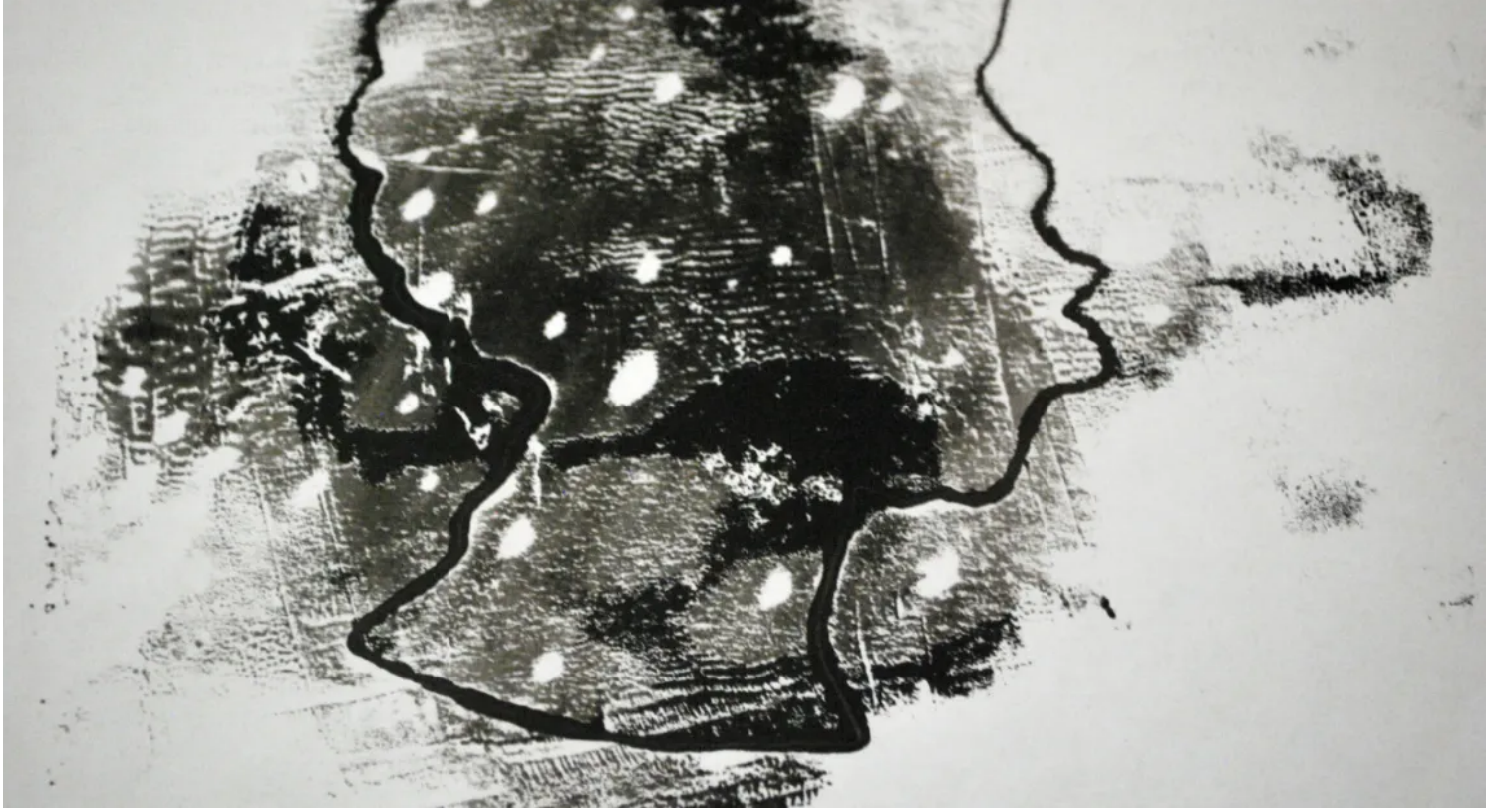
“I thought more about how I view society today and how I view other cultures which is what I made some of my artwork about.”

> “My favourite part of the project was feeling a sense of belonging - people coming together through their love of art and expressing and finding themselves through making.”

“I am now doing A-level Fine Art, Sociology and Religious Studies. As I had discussions at Youth Collective Group I realised that these subjects could interlink together and give me ideas for my art. Before this project I thought that I wouldn’t be able to do art at university, but when I came to the gallery I realised that I could do it.”

Gemma Wright, Head of Education at Camden Arts Centre, said: “It’s been a really wonderful year, we couldn’t have







Channah giving a talk Hydar Dewachi

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